MARVEL

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

THE GAUNTLET

THE COMPLETE COLLECTION VOL. 2

TOWNSEND

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

THE GAUNTLET

THE COMPLETE COLLECTION VOL. 2

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN: THE GAUNTLET

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #627-629

WRITER: **ROGER STERN**
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COLOR ARTIST: **DEAN WHITE** WITH **MATT HOLLINGSWORTH** (#629)
LETTERER: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
COVER ART: **LEE WEEKS** & **DEAN WHITE**

"BROTHER, CAN YOU SPARE A CRIME?"

WRITERS: **MARK WAID** & **TOM PEYER**
ARTIST: **TODD NAUCK**
COLOR ARTIST: **ANDRES MOSSA**
LETTERER: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**

"GAUNTLET ORIGINS: LIZARD"

WRITER: **FRED VAN LENTE**
ARTIST: **JEFTE PALO**
COLORIST: **JAVIER RODRIGUEZ**
LETTERER: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**

"SHED PRELUDE"

WRITER: **ZEB WELLS**
ARTIST: **XURXO PENALTA**
COLORIST: **MATT HOLLINGSWORTH**
LETTERER: **JARED K. FLETCHER**

"SHED PROLOGUE"

WRITER: **ZEB WELLS**
ARTIST/COLOR ARTIST: **CHRIS BACHALO**
LETTERER: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #630-633

WRITER: **ZEB WELLS**
PENCILERS: **CHRIS BACHALO** (#630-633) & **EMMA RIOS** (#631-633)
INKERS: **TIM TOWNSEND** (#630-633), **JAIME MENDOZA** (#630-633), **VICTOR OLAZABA** (#632-633), **CHRIS BACHALO** (#631-633) **EMMA RIOS** (#631-633) & **MARK IRWIN** (#633)
COLOR ARTIST: **ANTONIO FABELA**
LETTERER: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
COVER ART: **CHRIS BACHALO** & **TIM TOWNSEND**

"GAUNTLET ORIGINS: KRAVEN"

WRITER: **FRED VAN LENTE**
ARTIST: **PHILLIPE BRIONES**
COLORIST: **JODI WYNNE**
LETTERER: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN: ORIGIN OF THE HUNTER

WRITER: **MARC GUGGENHEIM**
ARTIST: **MIKE MAYHEW**
COLOR ARTISTS: **ANDY TROY** & **VAL STAPLES**
LETTERER: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
EDITOR: **JOHN DENNING**

GRIM HUNT PROLOGUE

WRITER: **JOE KELLY**
PENCILER: **MICHAEL LARK**
INKER: **STEFANO GAUDIANO**
COLORIST: **MATT HOLLINGSWORTH**
LETTERER: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #634-637

WRITER: **JOE KELLY** WITH **ZEB WELLS** (#636)
ARTISTS: **MICHAEL LARK** (#634-637), **STEFANO GAUDIANO** (#634-637) & **MARCO CHECCHETTO** (#636-637) WITH **MATTHEW SOUTHWORTH** (#635 & #637) & **BRIAN THIES** (#637)
COLORIST: **MATT HOLLINGSWORTH**
LETTERER: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
SPECIAL THANKS TO **PHIL JIMENEZ** & **MARC GUGGENHEIM**
DEDICATED TO **J.M. DEMATTEIS** & **MIKE ZECK**

"HUNTING THE HUNTER"

WRITER: **J.M. DEMATTEIS**
ARTISTS: **MAX FIUMARA** (PARTS 1-4) & **EMMA RIOS** (PARTS 3-4)
COLORIST: **FABIO D'AURIA**
LETTERER: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN PRESENTS: BLACK CAT #1-4

WRITER: **JEN VAN METER**
ARTISTS: **JAVIER PULIDO** (#1-4) & **JAVIER RODRIGUEZ** (#2-3)
COLORISTS: **MATT HOLLINGSWORTH** WITH **JAVIER RODRIGUEZ** (#3)
LETTERER: **VC's JOE CARAMAGNA**
COVER ART: **AMANDA CONNER** & **CHRISTINA STRAIN**

"MEMORIES"

WRITER: **BRIAN REED**
ARTIST: **NICK DRAGOTTA**
LETTERER: **VC's CLAYTON COWLES**
SPECIAL THANKS TO **BRAD SIMPSON**

"ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE"

WRITER: **ROGER STERN**
PENCILER: **RON FRENZ**
INKER: **VICTOR OLAZABA**
COLOR ARITST: **ANDREW DALHOUSE**
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AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #627

BUGLE GIRL

by BETTY BRANT

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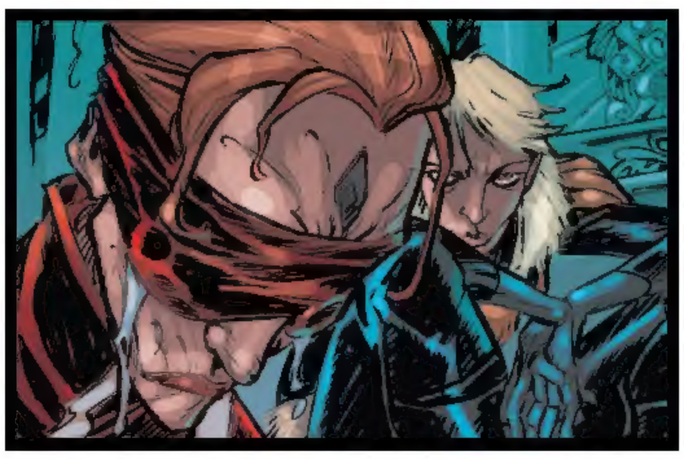
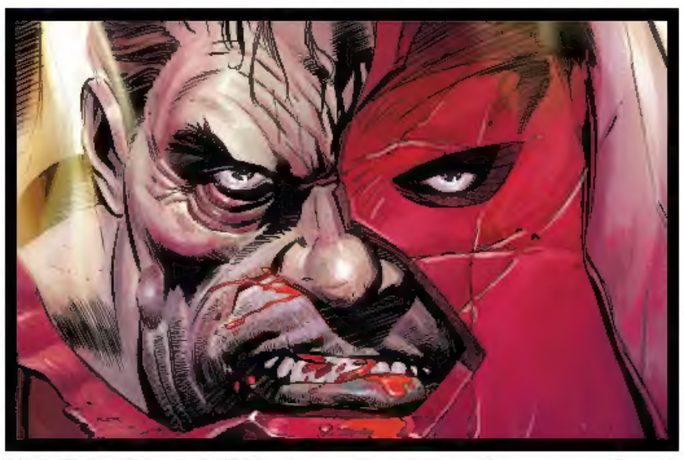


W.E.B. M.I.A.? Casandra Webb, the alleged psychic known as Madame Web, has been missing for several months now. Very few clues at the scene -- CSI experts claim "The kidnapper must have had the precison of a jungle hunter, we can't find any tracks..." more…



MARK-O' CAIN! Juggernaut, the mystical-gem-empowered super-criminal and half-brother of famed Mutant Rights advocate Charles Xavier, was seen just outside the city last night. The unstoppable force has lain low since severing ties with the X-Men. What's his next move? more…

IS RED/HARRY A RED HERRING?? It's been weeks since Norman Osborn's only son moved in with TV Personality Mary Jane Watson, and the scandal sheets can't get a single picture of the two together. Are they dating? Or is it a front? MJ's been taking phone calls from a mysterious suitor...you'll never believe who HE is! more…

Face the unemployment line, True Believers, Peter Parker's out of a job! When he forged a photo to exonerate his boss, Mayor J. Jonah Jameson, from being wrongly accused of creating the new Vulture, ol' Flattop Jameson himself fired Parker for violating journalistic ethics. Blacklisted from the photo game and with a sparse resume (thanks to his night gig as New York's Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man), Pete's out of work.

Beyond the professional, Pete's personal and super hero lives are in a downward spiral. His Aunt May publicly shamed him for his many failings (though what Pete doesn't know is that she's been slightly infected by Mr. Negative's dark force powers); his ex-fiancee Mary Jane Watson has barely spoken to him; his new friend Carlie Cooper thinks he's a total flake for never making time for her; and lately, his worst enemies have been returning with a vengeance, revamped, revived and ready to destroy him.

All in all, it's been a rough couple of months – and Pete's coming close to losing his grip altogether. At war with an unstoppable gauntlet, even Peter Parker may throw in the towel…before something stops him.

SOMETIMES, BEING SPIDER-MAN IS A REAL PAIN. LITERALLY.

ARRGH!

BACK DURING MY WONDER YEARS, AN IRRADIATED SPIDER BIT ME--AND SCRAMBLED MY GENES. IT WAS LIKE GOING THROUGH PUBERTY TIMES TEN.

MY STRENGTH AND AGILITY INCREASED EXPONENTIALLY. I COULD WALK UP WALLS.

AND I GAINED THIS WEIRD *"SPIDER-SENSE."*

A SLIGHT CHANCE OF DANGER MAKES MY SCALP TINGLE. AN IMMEDIATE THREAT MAKES MY HEAD BUZZ. THE FEELING I'M GETTING RIGHT NOW...?

TOTAL SPIKE BETWEEN THE EYES.

OOO... FIREWORKS!

PETER? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

STAR HAIR SALON

Pinto's PIZZA

THAT'S NOT FIREWORKS. I DON'T KNOW *WHAT* IT IS...

WHAT'S WRONG?

...BUT I THINK IT'S SOMEHOW THE *SOURCE* OF MY PAIN.

WRONG...? DUNNO, CARLIE. GOT A STABBING PAIN...ALL OF A SUDDEN...RIGHT BETWEEN MY EYES.

OUCH! SOUNDS LIKE A CLUSTER HEADACHE. MAYBE WE SHOULD SKIP DINNER.

CARLIE... I DON'T WANT TO LET YOU DOWN AGAIN. I PROMISED YOU...

IT'S OKAY, PETER. I'LL TAKE A RAIN CHECK.

LOOK, MY FATHER USED TO GET CLUSTER HEADACHES. I KNOW HOW BAD THEY ARE.

YOU'RE STILL STRESSED OUT OVER LOSING YOUR JOB, AREN'T YOU?

THE LAST THING EITHER OF US NEEDS IS YOU GRIMACING OVER *MOO SHU PORK.*

GO HOME... TAKE IT EASY UNTIL THIS PASSES.

'KAY... I'LL CALL YOU...

WOW. THAT WAS DIFFERENT. I'M NOT USED TO FRIENDS MAKING MY EXCUSES *FOR* ME.

I WISH *CARLIE COOPER* HAD BEEN AROUND WHEN I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL. I REALLY NEEDED A FRIEND LIKE HER BACK THEN...!

SHE'S UNDERSTANDING, AND SHE'S AS SCIENCE-GEEKY AS I AM. I CAN MAKE A JOKE ABOUT *SCHRÖDINGER'S CAT,* AND SHE GETS IT.

I AM *DEFINITELY* HONORING THAT RAIN CHECK!

BUT FIRST, I GOTTA DEAL WITH THE PAIN... MY WAY.

Y-E-A-H, THAT *MUST* BE THE SOURCE OF THE DANGER. LOOK AT IT GO, LIKE A...METEOR?

CAN'T BE! A METEOR THAT SIZE WOULD HIT LIKE A BABY NUKE--

--AND I THINK THAT LEVEL OF DANGER WOULD MAKE MY HEAD EXPLODE.

WHAT *ARE* YOU, MR. U-F-O?

CENTRAL PARK?

AND *WHERE* ARE YOU HEADED?

O-KAY...

HUNH...SPIDER-SENSE BUZZ IS STARTING TO EASE A BIT. DID THE THREAT *BURN UP?* SOMETHING'S DEFINITELY CHANGED.

I KNOW I'M GETTING CLOSE. TIME TO STASH MY STREET CLOTHES OUT OF THE WAY...

...AND GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS.

HELLO, *SCORCHED EARTH!*

THANKS FOR LEAVING SUCH AN EASY TRAIL TO FOLLOW.

I SURE HOPE THIS ISN'T A CAST-OFF INFANT ROCKETED TO EARTH FROM A DOOMED PLANET. I'M NOT READY TO PLAY FOSTER FATHER TO...

UH-OH.

THAT'S NO SPACE-BABY. I THINK I RECOGNIZE THOSE *SIZE-30s.*

NO...IT *CAN'T* BE...

...BUT IT *IS!* IT'S THE JUGGERNAUT!

SOMETHING CAN STOP THE JUGGERNAUT?!?

BUT WHAT? *WHO?!*

ROGER STERN
WRITER

LEE WEEKS
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VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA
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GALE, KELLY, SLOTT, VAN LENTE, WAID & WELLS WEB-HEADS

IS HE ALIVE...?

CAN'T TELL IF HE'S BREATHING. I'M NOT SURE HE EVEN *NEEDS* TO BREATHE.

THIS GUY'S THE HARDEST NUT I EVER TRIED TO CRACK.

HE JUST ABOUT CRACKED *ME* THE FIRST TIME I TRIED TO STOP HIM.

IN AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #229-230 --1982 STEVE

AND THE SECOND TIME DIDN'T GO MUCH EASIER... EVEN WITH THE *X-MEN* BACKING ME UP.

IN MARVEL TEAM-UP #150 --1985 STEVE

JUGGERNAUT'S TOUGH IN ARMOR OR OUT. OF COURSE, THE LAST TIME WE SERIOUSLY FOUGHT, I WAS ALSO BATTLING A BAD CASE OF VERTIGO. THAT DIDN'T HELP AT ALL.

AT LEAST WE CAME TO A SORT OF *TRUCE* AT THE END OF THAT LITTLE DUSTUP.

IN PETER PARKER SPIDER-MAN #84 --1997 STEVE

AH, FOUND A *PULSE.*

WHAT HAPPENED TO HIS *HELMET?*

I ONCE ALMOST DISLOCATED SOMETHING, TRYING TO PRY THAT POT OFF HIS HEAD--

--BUT FROM THE LOOKS OF THINGS, SOMETHING *SHREDDED* IT!

WEO-WEO-WEO-

SIRENS... CLOSING WAY FAST.

TIME FOR ALL GOOD LITTLE SPIDERS TO SCURRY OUT OF SIGHT--

THIS WAY!

--BEFORE THE POLICE ARRIVE AND BLAME *ME* FOR THIS.

NOTHING MORE I CAN DO FOR JUGGY ANYWAY.

I DIDN'T THINK I'D BE THE ONLY ONE WHO NOTICED THAT SOMETHING BIG AND BRIGHT SLAMMED INTO THE PARK.

GOT TO HAND IT TO NEW YORK'S FINEST. THEY HAVE THE AREA CORDONED OFF IN NO TIME...

AMBULANCE

PARAMEDICS

8537

HEY, OFFICER! WHAT'S UP?

WHAT'RE *YOU* DOING HERE? GET BACK--!

IT'S COOL. I'M A PHOTOGRAPHER FOR ***FRONT LINE***. WANNA SEE MY PRESS PASS?

I WON'T GET IN ANYONE'S WAY...I WORK FROM A DISTANCE.

POLICE CAN BE SO REASONABLE IF YOU MAKE NICE...AND AREN'T WEARING A MASK.

EVEN BETTER, EVERYONE'S TOO BUSY TO RUN A CHECK ON MY JOB STATUS.

LOOKS LIKE THE ***CODE: BLUE*** SPECIAL UNIT HAS THEIR HANDS FULL GETTING JUGGERNAUT OUT OF THAT TRENCH.

POLICE

WHILE THEY DO THEIR THING, I DO MINE...

KLIK KLIK

THEY BETTER KEEP THAT LIFT BALANCED...

"...ACCORDING TO HIS SHEET, JUGGERNAUT WEIGHS CLOSE TO HALF-A-TON!"

YOU GOT THAT RIGHT.

KLIK

WHAT GIVES WITH HIM, ANYWAY?

LAST I HEARD, HE WAS S'POSED TO BE PERFORMING COMMUNITY SERVICE.

POLICE

IZZAT SO? WELL, MAYBE HE GOT HIT WHILE HE WAS PICKING UP TRASH ALONG THE HIGHWAY.

HEH! GOOD ONE, KID. BUT IF THIS WAS A *HIT-AND-RUN*...

...WHO THE DEVIL WAS THE *HITTER?*

177A Bleecker Street, The Next Day.

THE SEEMINGLY DESERTED TOWNHOUSE OF DOCTOR STEPHEN STRANGE.

RRRING RRRING

GOOD MORNING, SPIDER-MAN.

WONG...?

HOW'D YOU KNOW IT WAS ME? I HAVE I.D.-BLOCK ON THIS CELL.

I WAS TOLD TO EXPECT YOUR CALL.

YOU WISH TO CONSULT WITH DOCTOR STRANGE ON THE MATTER OF CAIN MARKO, THE JUGGERNAUT.

RIGHT.

LOOK, I KNOW DOC HAS BEEN THROUGH SOME CHANGES LATELY, BUT I COULD REALLY USE HIS HELP.

REGRETFULLY, THE DOCTOR IS UNAVAILABLE. HE IS...ON ANOTHER CALL.

BUT HE LEFT WORD THAT YOU HAVE THE WHEREWITHAL TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT YOU WISH.

GOOD LUCK, SPIDER-MAN. MAY THE *VISHANTI* BE WITH YOU.

WELL, THIS IS JUST DANDY.

...AND NONE OF THE OTHER SUPER-TYPES WHO MIGHT TALK TO ME ARE EVEN PICKING UP. ISN'T THAT ALWAYS THE WAY?

DOC'S OUT OF TOWN...PROFESSOR X'S* VOICEMAIL WAS OUT OF SERVICE...

*CHARLES XAVIER, FOUNDER OF THE X-MEN AND JUGGERNAUT'S STEPBROTHER --SOCIAL-REGISTER WACKER.

ONCE AGAIN, I'M ON MY OWN. OH, WELL...

...THAT'S LIFE IN THE BIG CITY.

MY PURSE!

STOP! THIEF!

1753

THWIP

WHA--?!

YOU HEARD THE LADY!

NOW, HANG TIGHT AND THINK ABOUT WHAT YOU'VE DONE.

H-HE--! Y-YOU--!

IT'S OKAY. I'D NEVER HURT YOU--

--AND HE WON'T BE GOING ANYWHERE FOR AT LEAST AN HOUR.

TH-THANK YOU...

OKAY, BACK TO WORK. THINK, PARKER...

WHO IS CAPABLE OF TAKING DOWN THE JUGGERNAUT? THE ***SILVER SURFER?*** DOESN'T SEEM LIKE HIS STYLE.

THE HULK? BOY, I HOPE NOT. I NEVER KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO FACE WITH...THAT...GUY...

WHAT THE--?!

OKAY, PARKING AROUND WASHINGTON SQUARE HAS ALWAYS BEEN AT A PREMIUM, BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS.

I DOUBT THAT DETROIT'S TESTING A FLYING S.U.V... THAT WOULD HAVE MADE THE "INTERNETS."

LOOKS OCCUPIED. THIS SHOULD BE INTERESTING...

'MORNING, FELLA. THAT MUST'VE BEEN SOME PARTY.

WOO!

YEAH.

HUH?

LET ME GUESS--

--YOU TOOK A WRONG TURN AT THE LINCOLN TUNNEL.

WHU--? NO, MAN.

SOME BLUE-AN'-WHITE FLYIN' GUY DUMPED ME HERE.

YEEESH! SMELLS LIKE A BEER BARREL CRAWLED DOWN HIS THROAT AND DIED.

FIGURED I'D JUST SLEEP IT OFF, YA KNOW?

DON'T TOUCH ME, OKAY?

I THINK YOU NEED A MORE THOROUGH AIRING OUT.

HE'S ALL YOURS, OFFICERS!

WHAT A MORNING.

OH, MAN.

I'M GONNA HURL--!

GIVE 'IM ROOM. *LOTS* OF ROOM!

NO THANKS NECESSARY, GENTS.

JUST DOING MY CIVIC DUTY.

POLICE

POLICE

AND NOW WE HAVE A NEW MYSTERY: *"WHO IS THE BLUE-&-WHITE TRAFFIC VIGILANTE?"*

THINK I'LL LET THE NYPD WORRY ABOUT THAT ONE...

AND I STILL...HAVEN'T FOUND...WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR...

Avenue A.
THE APARTMENT OF PETER PARKER AND HIS ROOMIE MICHELE GONZALES.

NUTS, I FORGOT TO RESET MY CLOCK RADIO. MUST'VE BEEN ON ALL MORNING.

...BONO AND THE BOYS FROM JOSHUA TREE.

CUE THE OCCASIONAL ROOMMATE-FROM-HELL--

"STOP WASTING MY ELECTRICITY, PARKER. I HATE CLASSIC ROCK!"

...TIME NOW FOR DAVID GREER WITH THE NEWS...

I HOPE MICHELE LEFT FOR WORK EARLY. I'D HATE TO JEOPARDIZE OUR TRUCE.

...OVERNIGHT INCIDENT THAT LEFT THE INFAMOUS JUGGERNAUT COMATOSE...

FHEW! DEAD BEER STENCH. BETTER CATCH A QUICK SHOWER--

--IN OTHER NEWS, GEOLOGISTS AT EMPIRE STATE UNIVERSITY HAVE REPORTED UNUSUAL SEISMIC ACTIVITY IN LOWER MANHAT--
KLIK

OLD NEWS, PAL.

--AND HUSTLE DOWNSTAIRS...

...TO MY FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD LAUNDROMAT.

WHILE I SUDS MY DUDS, I CAN USE THE FREE *WI-FI* TO CHECK FOR LEADS. I CAN'T SHAKE THE FEELING THAT JUGGY'S ATTACKER--WHOEVER IT WAS--MEANS BIG TROUBLE.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE INTERNET ISN'T PROVIDING MUCH MORE THAN THE USUAL CONSPIRACY THEORIES.

I WISH I COULD ACCESS THE OLD AVENGERS ARCHIVES...

BRRRRT

AH, LAUNDRY'S DONE.

I LOVE THIS PLACE. WITH JUST ONE LONE SECURITY CAMERA, IT'S EASY TO BLOCK THE VIEW OF MY FRESHLY LAUNDERED SPIDER-SUIT.

HELLO, *AMAR* HERE...

EXIT

TRINA? I CAN HARDLY HEAR YOU.

YOUR SIGNAL'S BREAKING UP.

WELCOME TO THE 21ST CENTURY, PAL.

THAT'S BETTER... WHAT? NO...

...NO, DO *NOT* INVITE HARI AND YASMINE. *WHY?*

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN HOW THEY STOOD US UP FOR DINNER?

DINNER?

OMIGOD...

...CARLIE!

RESTAURANT

IT'S NOT EXACTLY IMPERIAL CHINESE, BUT THEY WERE BOOKED FOR A BIG PARTY...

PETER, WILL YOU STOP? I *LOVE* THIS PLACE...EXCELLENT COMFORT FOOD. SPEAKING OF COMFORT...

...HOW'S YOUR HEAD?

BETTER. IN FACT, THE PAIN EASED UP ENOUGH THAT I...WELL...

...I WORKED MOST OF THE NIGHT, TAKING PHOTOS OF THE JUGGERNAUT. I'M SORRY--!

HEY, BEEN THERE. SO MANY TIMES, I'D BE PULLING AN ALL-NIGHTER AT THE PRECINCT--

--FEELING ALL-IN--AND THEN, GET A SUDDEN RUSH OF ADRENALINE. WHENEVER THAT HAPPENS, YOU JUST GO WITH THE FLOW.

SO, C'MON, FEED MY MORBID CURIOSITY! WHAT'D HE LOOK LIKE?

JUGGERNAUT? *BAD.* ONE FOOT IN THE GRAVE BAD.

YOU HEARD ANYTHING NEW ON HIS CONDITION?

ONLY THAT HE'S BEEN SLIPPING IN AND OUT OF CONSCIOUSNESS. I DON'T THINK HE'S SAID ANYTHING, BUT NO ONE ON THE FORCE IS SURE.

HE'S BEING HELD AT THE OLD *INWOOD ARMORY,* PENDING THE OUTCOME OF A TURF WAR WITH THE FBI. NYPD'S BEEN LOCKED OUT UNTIL IT'S SETTLED.

TOO BAD...

...BUT I KNOW SOMEONE WHO CAN GET IN TO SEE HIM.

Upper Manhattan.

THE INWOOD ARMORY HASN'T BEEN USED FOR MUCH OF ANYTHING IN YEARS.

LOOKS LIKE THE FEDS HAVE THROWN TOGETHER A PRETTY TIGHT CORDON AROUND THE OLD PLACE.

I THINK THOSE ARE *ARMY RANGERS* ON THE ROOF.

THAT'S IT, GUYS... KEEP SCANNING THAT PERIMETER.

DON'T LOOK UP...DON'T LOOK UP...

FTEP

DID YOU HEAR THAT?

HEAR WHAT?

IT CAME FROM OVER HERE.

THERE? I DON'T SEE ANYTHING.

CHECK THE CHIMNEY.

CLEAR.

MUST'VE IMAGINED IT.

THEY ALWAYS CHECK THE CHIMNEYS. MAKES SENSE...

...NO ONE EXPECTS SANTA TO SKINNY DOWN A *VENT*.

WE SPIDER-MEN, ON THE OTHER HAND, ARE A SVELTER LOT--AND MUCH MORE AGILE.

AHA! JUST AS I HOPED, THEY HAD TO SLAP SECURITY TOGETHER SO QUICKLY, THEY DIDN'T TAKE TIME TO STICK SENSORS IN THE VENT SYSTEM.

CRAZY IF YOU ASK ME.

HELLO...

MUST HAVE CLOSE TO A COMPANY SURROUNDING THIS PLACE...

...AND FOR WHAT? TO GUARD SOME BIG GOON WHO CAN'T EVEN SIT UP?

THAT "*GOON*"--

--ONCE RIPPED THROUGH DOWNTOWN LIKE IT WAS MADE OF *TISSUE PAPER*.

WE'RE HERE TO MAKE SURE HE STAYS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THAT WALL.

THANKS FOR THE DIRECTIONS. LET'S SEE...

...HERE WE ARE.

CAREFUL... NOT TOO FAR.

I'M NOT QUITE READY FOR MY CLOSE-UP.

ONE SECURITY CAMERA... NO SOUND.

THEN AGAIN--

--THEY DID MAKE SURE THAT THE BIG GUY WAS TUCKED IN TIGHT, DIDN'T THEY?

AND FROM THIS VANTAGE, ONE CAMERA COVERS MOST OF THE CHAMBER.

STANDARD PORTS... GOOD, I CAN WORK WITH THIS.

LET'S SEE... WHAT'S IN MY CAMERA?

BETTER NOT USE THIS MEMORY CARD.

SD 4GB

IF I HAVE TO BUG OUT, I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE ANY IMAGES BEHIND.

FORTUNATELY, I HAVE A SPARE. NOW...

...WE JUST RUN A FEED FROM THE SECURITY CAM TO MY DIGITAL...

...RECORD A VIDEO LOOP OF JUGGERNAUT *IN SITU* ONTO THE SPARE CARD...

8GB

KLIK

...ATTACH IT THUSLY...

...AND NOW, AS FAR AS THE ARMY'S *MONITOR* IS CONCERNED--

--I'M THE LITTLE SPIDER-MAN WHO ISN'T THERE.

60

MARKO? CAN YOU HEAR ME?

IT'S ME... SPIDER-MAN...

...REMEMBER HOW THE AVENGERS AND I HELPED YOU FIGHT THE EXEMPLARS?

WE WERE ALL ON THE SAME SIDE THEN...

IN AVENGERS VOL 3, #24-25 --2KSTEVE

SPIDER... MAN...?

THAT'S RIGHT, BIG GUY. AND I WANT TO HELP AGAIN.

TALK TO ME. WHO DID THIS TO YOU?

FLYIN' GUY... NEVER...SEEN 'IM B'FORE...ALL BLUE AN' WHITE... SHINY...

DID YOU SAY "BLUE AND WHITE"...?

I'M GETTING A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS.

YOW!

SPIDER-MAN?

STAND ASIDE!

I AM HERE TO FINISH THE JOB I STARTED--

--TO *SLAY* THE JUGGERNAUT--

--AND FULFILL MY DESTINY AS

CAPTAIN UNIVERSE

OBOY.

In Two Weeks:
VENGEANCE is MINE!

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #628

VENGEANCE IS MINE!

OKAY, SO THERE'S A NEW *CAPTAIN UNIVERSE* IN TOWN.

JUST WHAT I NEEDED TO BRIGHTEN MY DAY--

--A *COSMIC HOTHEAD* WITH A SERIOUS GRUDGE AGAINST THE *JUGGERNAUT!*

HEY, TAKE IT EASY ON THOSE *RESTRAINTS!* THAT'S *GOVERNMENT PROPERTY.*

OH, YEAH, LIKE HE *CARES* ABOUT MY TAX DOLLARS! IF HE DID--

--HE WOULDN'T HAVE BROKEN INTO AN *ARMORY!*

WHAT THE HELL'S GOING ON IN THERE?

I-I DON'T KNOW, BUT--

--THE *MONITOR* SHOWS JUGGERNAUT STILL OUT COLD! DOESN'T MAKE SENSE, UNLESS--!

KRAKOOM

STAY OUT OF MY WAY, SPIDER-MAN!

WHY DON'T WE GRAB A COUPLE EGG CREAMS AND TALK THIS OVER LIKE MEN--IN THE 1930s?

SOMEONE'S SCREWED WITH THE VIDEO FEED!

GET THAT DOOR *OPEN!*

UUNGH! NO GO! IT'S *JAMMED--!*

CENT-COM TO ALL UNITS--THE WEST WALL'S BEEN BREACHED! INITIATE EMERGENCY PROTOCOL A!

*SPIDER-MAN DID IT LAST ISSUE -SECURITY STEVE

SO YOU HAVE A BEEF WITH JUGGERNAUT.

I SYMPATHIZE.

HELLO? CAPTAIN?

I DON'T BELIEVE IT. HE'S *IGNORING* ME!

WHAT, HAVE I BECOME *INVISIBLE* ALL OF A SUDDEN?

LOOK, IF YOU'RE THE ONE WHO CLOBBERED THE JUGGERNAUT, I'M OFFICIALLY IMPRESSED--

--BUT DON'T HIT THE POOR GUY WHILE HE'S DOWN!

YOO-HOO! I'M OVER HE-ERE!

SPIDER-MAN...

...SHUT! UP!

HEY--

VRAP

--WATCH IT!

NOW WHAT WAS *THAT?*

DON'T KNOW. BUT SOMETHING JUST *KILLED* THE FEED!

LOOK, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR PROBLEM WITH THE J-MAN IS, BUT--!

HE RUINED MY LIFE. HE'S A *MONSTER.*

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THAT HE ONCE TRIED TO KILL *YOU?*

MORE THAN ONCE, ACTUALLY.

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?

I KNOW.

I'VE BEEN CHOSEN TO FULFILL A HIGHER PURPOSE.

HRENK

WHOA!

STOP...!

THIS...THIS WON'T PLEASE THE *ENIGMA FORCE!*

WHAT...?

WHAT DO YOU KNOW OF--?

THE ENIGMA FORCE? COSMIC SOURCE OF THE *UNI-POWER?*

CHOOSES A CHAMPION AND TURNS HIM OR HER INTO *CAPTAIN UNIVERSE* WHENEVER GRAVE DANGER FACES HUMANITY?

TRUST ME, I'VE BEEN THERE.

C'MON, CAPPY...

...DO YOU REALLY THINK STOMPING THE JUGGERNAUT IS THE REASON YOU WERE CHOSEN?

SPIDER-MAN TEMPORARILY BECAME CAPTAIN UNIVERSE CIRCA AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #327-329.--*UNI-STEVE*

YES!

THOOM

CENT-COM TO OVERHEAD. WHAT'S GOING ON? SEE ANYTHING OUT THERE?

E. SANTOS

ROGER THAT, CENT-COM. SOMETHING JUST... *EXPLODED* THROUGH THE WEST WALL!

A-AND I THINK I SAW SPIDER-MAN ON IT...!

NOT GOOD...!

GLAD I LOADED EXTRA WEB-CARTRIDGES TONIGHT...

THWIP

I HATE USING SO MUCH WEBBING-- THIS STUFF ISN'T CHEAP--

-- BUT WE NEED A *BUMPER*, BIG-TIME! AT THIS SPEED, WE'RE GOING TO CLEAR THE HUDSON--

--AND THERE'S NOTHING SOFT ABOUT THE *JERSEY PALISADES*--

HNNH! THE JUGGERNAUT PROVED STURDIER THAN THE METAL SLAB.

ODD. THERE'S NO SIGN OF...

HEY, LAUGHING BOY!

?

HA! MADE YA LOOK!

THWAP

YIPEE-TI-YI-YO!

YOU FOOL! I CAN'T SEE--!

RELAX, CAPPY--AND LEAVE THE STEERING TO--

--MEEEEEEE!

SLOW DOWN! WE'RE GONNA HIT--!

OKAY, SO WE MISSED THE BRIDGE TOWERS. BUT YOU'RE NOT MAKING THIS EASY!

NORTH 95 TO
W 178 ST.
H HUDSON PKWY
9A

JUST CHEMICALS

UH, CAPPY? WHAT'S WITH THE GLOW...?

UH-OH.

FWOOSH

SPIDER-MAN?

AH. YOUR WEBBING CANNOT WITHSTAND A FULL-BODY *ENERGY RELEASE*, SPIDER-MAN!

THAT WAS CLOSE.

CAPTAIN UNIVERSE IS A LITTLE MORE THAN I SIGNED ON TO FIGHT. THIS IS A JOB FOR THE FANTASTIC FOUR OR THE AVENGERS!

NEWS

6

I'M CALLING IN BACKUP BEFORE--!

OH, NICE GOING, PARKER!

YOU REMEMBER TO LOAD EXTRA WEB CARTRIDGES, BUT FORGET TO RECHARGE YOUR *CELL-PHONE.*

AND CAPTAIN U'S FIGURED OUT WHERE I WENT. I WONDER HOW FAST HE CAN CORNER?

ANSWER: NOT FAST ENOUGH!

FWUGH!

AND I DON'T THINK HE'LL RISK ANOTHER OF THOSE ENERGY BLASTS THAT CLOSE TO THE 'COPTER.

AT LEAST I HOPE NOT.

THIS *IS* A GUY WHO *MELTED* HIS WAY INTO A NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY, JUST TO GO ANOTHER ROUND WITH THE JUGGERNAUT.

OKAY, THINK FAST...!

IS HE SUICIDAL?

IF I WEB UP A CHUTE OR A GLIDER, I'M A SITTING DUCK. BUT THERE IS ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE!

GIVEN THE ELASTICITY OF MY WEBBING--

THWIP

--AND HEIGHT OF THAT ROOFTOP WATER TOWER...THIS SHOULD WORK...

...IF MY SHOULDERS HOLD OUT!

Y-E-E-EAH!! ALL RIGHT! ANOTHER VICTORY FOR PHYSICS AND GEOMETRY!

WOO-HOO-HOO!

WHUP! DID I CHEER TOO SOON?

ALL OF A SUDDEN, I'M GETTING A QUEASY FEELING--AND I DOUBT LAST NIGHT'S MEATLOAF IS TO BLAME.

?!?

THIS IS A LOW-LEVEL *SPIDER-SENSE* WARNING.

MUST MEAN THAT *UNIVERSE-O* IS HOT ON MY TRAIL.

HOW DO I REASON WITH HIM? I DON'T WANT TO GET BEATEN UP--

--LIKE JUGGERNAUT.

UNIT 7 TO DISPATCH. WE'VE *FOUND* HIM.

COPY THAT, SEVEN. WHAT'S THE SITUATION?

WE'RE ABOUT A MILE-AND-A-QUARTER NORTH OF THE G.W. BRIDGE AT THE BASE OF THE CLIFF.

SUBJECT IS ALIVE, BUT UNCONSCIOUS.

LOOK AT THE *SIZE* OF 'IM!

WE'RE GONNA NEED A *CRANE* TO LIFT HIM OUT OF HERE.

THERE'S A LOT OF METAL WRECKAGE ON SITE...

...AND WHAT APPEARS TO BE... *WEBBING?*

SEVEN, BE ADVISED THAT SPIDER-MAN MAY BE INVOLVED.

SPIDER-MAN, HUH?

WELL, HE'S NOT HERE NOW.

POLICE

ROGER THAT, SEVEN. JUST STAY ALERT...

SPIDER-MAN? YEAH...I REMEMBER HIM YAMMERING... THEN A BRIGHT LIGHT...

WHERE AM I? LOOKS LIKE JERSEY.

HELMET'S GONE?

NO MATTER. LONG AS THE POWER'S IN ME--

--I CAN ALWAYS MAKE ANOTHER.

SSSSSSSSS

THAT'S BETTER.

IT'S COMING BACK TO ME NOW...

SEVEN, WE'RE GETTING REPORTS THAT SPIDER-MAN WAS SPOTTED SOUTH OF THE G.W.--

--HEADING INTO THE CITY WITH--IS THIS RIGHT?-- AN UNIDENTIFIED FLYING MAN IN PURSUIT...

...SO AT LEAST YOU WON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT HIM.

YEAH...

...NO WORRIES.

WHAT WAS THAT, SEVEN?

SEVEN? DO YOU COPY?

The West Side Highway.

TEN-TEN WINS--ALL NEWS, ALL THE TIME!

WE'RE GETTING REPORTS OF A SPIDER-MAN SIGHTING ALONG THE SOUTHBOUND LANES OF THE WEST SIDE HIGHWAY...MOTORISTS ARE URGED TO USE CAUTION...

ONLY IN NEW YORK.

WST

YA KNOW, I'VE LIVED HERE ALL MY LIFE, AN' I'VE NEVER SEEN ANY SPIDER-MEN.

YEAH?

I SAW THE HUMAN TORCH ONCE, BUT...WHOA!

PWFFT!

I-IT'S HIM!

KEEP GOING--

--KEEP GOING--!

PUMP MARKETING

NUTS! NOTHING AHEAD BUT EMPTY HIGHWAY FOR BLOCKS AND--!

Brooklyn

CAR TOLL $18.00

FDR Drive NORTH

9A

Battery

67738

YOU! SPIDER-MAN!

NO. ME, SPIDER-MAN! YOU, CAPTAIN --!

HEY, LEGGO! STOP--!

OR AT LEAST WATCH WHERE--

KERA SH

--YOU'RE GOING.

75

GOT MILK?

9-1-1...

A COUPLE GUYS JUST CRASHED INTO THE *PIER 60 HEALTH CLUB!*

ONE OF 'EM'S *SPIDER-MAN.* I DON'T RECOGNIZE THE OTHER ONE--

--BUT I DON'T THINK HE'S A MEMBER.

WHERE...?

GOOD MORNING, SIR. DO YOU WISH TOWEL SERVICE?

WHA--?

IT'S COMPLIMENTARY!

FWAP

SPIDER-MAN...!

UH...

NAVY

TH-THAT WAY!

HEADED EAST.

OUT THROUGH THE HOLE YOU MADE.

PLEASE DON'T HURT US.

I CAN'T BELIEVE HE FELL FOR THAT TRICK AGAIN.

CAREFUL, PARKER. DON'T GET COCKY.

THIS CAPTAIN UNIVERSE MAY BE NEW AT THE GAME--

KEEP OUT

--BUT I WON'T SHAKE HIM FOR LONG.

I HAVE TO MAKE A STAND.

AND HERE, AT LEAST, NO ONE ELSE WILL GET HURT.

YOU SHOULD KNOW BY NOW THAT YOU CAN'T HOLD ME LONG THIS WAY.

I DON'T EXPECT TO.

I JUST WANTED TO GET YOUR ATTENTION LONG ENOUGH TO--!

WE HAVE NOTHING FURTHER TO DISCUSS. I HAVE A HIGHER PURPOSE TO FULFILL.

SO YOU'VE SAID. BUT EXPLAIN TO ME HOW--

OW!!

THIS IS A BAD ONE.

IS THE GROUND...?

SOMETHING JUST TURNED MY SPIDER-SENSE UP TO ELEVEN.

SHAKING?

YES. THE EARTH SHUDDERS.

"SHUDDERS," HUH? IS WORSE ON THE WAY? IS MAYBE YOUR "HIGHER PURPOSE" TO--!

SHUT UP!

GAHH!

THAT...*MIND ZAP*... HURT A LOT MORE... THAN ANY SPIDER-SENSE MIGRAINE.

HEY... WHA...?

YOU MAY BE RIGHT.

THEN WHY ARE YOU--?

WE HAVE UNFINISHED BUSINESS, YOU AND I.

HWUK

I'LL DEAL WITH YOU WHEN I RETURN.

JUST WHEN YOU THINK THINGS CAN'T GET ANY WEIRDER...

Subterranean Manhattan.

THIS...IS MY DESTINY...?

IF YOU SO CHOOSE

THERE ARE JAGGED FRACTURES WITHIN THESE TECTONIC PLATES...

...INTOLERABLE STRESSES ARE BUILDING. REACH INTO THE PLATES...

...AND HEAL THEM. THAT'S IT.

...DIRECT THE UNI-POWER.

YOU ARE... THE *ENIGMA FORCE?*

ONE ASPECT OF IT...YES.

WHY HAVEN'T YOU SPOKEN BEFORE...?

YOU WERE NOT READY TO LISTEN.

THESE PLATES ARE SO VAST...I FEEL LIKE AN ANT IN COMPARISON.

DO NOT DESPAIR. THE UNI-POWER IS WITH YOU.

THERE ARE DOZENS OF FRACTURES NEEDING REPAIR. I CAN *FEEL* THEM...

YOU ARE LEARNING.

CHANNEL IT. USE ITS ENERGIES...

WAIT A MINUTE.

NO

NO

I'VE LEFT HUNDREDS--MAYBE THOUSANDS--OF LOWLIFES TRUSSED UP OVER THE YEARS.

BUT *THEY* DESERVED IT...

HARD TO GET ANY LEVERAGE.

BUT IF I CAN...TWIST MY SHOULDER... JUST A LITTLE MORE...

WHAT...*AGAIN* WITH THE SPIDER-SENSE BUZZ? HOW COULD THINGS POSSIBLY GET WORSE...?

OH.

UH...HI, JUGGY, OL' SPORT.

FANCY MEETING YOU HERE.

SO...YA THINK THE METS HAVE A CHANCE THIS SEASON?

JUG? WHAT ARE YOU--?

HEY! *DON'T--!*

FWIP

RELAX, WEB-HEAD.

YOU'RE... FREEING ME?

YEAH. FIGURED THAT I OWED YOU ONE.

THANKS. HOW'D YOU FIND ME?

BORROWED A JERSEY TROOPER'S RADIO. HEARD ABOUT THE HEALTH CLUB.

KNEW YOU'D TRY TO LURE FLYING BOY TO A PLACE LIKE THIS. WHERE IS HE?

LONG STORY.

BUT NOW THAT YOU'RE HERE... UH-OH.

LOOK OUT!

3

SO!

KA

BOOM

THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH SPIDER-SENSE--

--IT SELDOM GIVES ME TIME TO PASS ALONG A WARNING.

YOU WON'T RUIN ANOTHER LIFE, MONSTER!

HEY! PLAY NICE OR THERE'LL BE NO DESSERT

I WARNED YOU--!

I'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE.

YOU GOT LUCKY THE FIRST TIME, BLUE.

NOW IT'S MY TURN!

WHAM

AW, GEEZ...

NO, JUGGY. NO! C'MON... *UNCLENCH.*

STAY OUT OF THIS, WEBS.

THIS IS BETWEEN ME AND BLUE.

NO... *UUNGH...* IT'S *BIGGER* THAN THAT.

I DON'T CARE.

LISTEN, I'VE... GOT A *FEELING...!* YOU *HAVE* TO CARE!

I THINK WE *NEED* THIS GUY...TO SAVE THE DAY.

DON'T... WORRY...ABOUT *ME*, SPIDER-MAN--

--WORRY ABOUT *YOURSELF!*

I HAVE YOU--

--*BOTH* OF YOU--

--RIGHT WHERE I WANT YOU!

AND I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU *SUFFER*...

...LIKE YOU'VE MADE **ME** SUFFER!

Whatever You Do, Don't Miss Next Week's Fear-Fraught Conclusion:

With Greater Power...

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #629

NYPD's Fifth Precinct House.
19 ELIZABETH STREET.

HEY, SARGE.
MORNING, COOPER.
...THAT GIANT JAPANESE BUILDING GOING UP IN THE KITCHEN.
...WHAT THEY ALL SAY.
ANOTHER LONG STAKE-OUT...
NEED YOU TO MAKE BAIL...

BRENDA!
HEY, CARLIE.
WHAT'S UP?
WHAT'S NOT? IT'S GONNA BE ONE OF *THOSE* DAYS...
...WE'VE BEEN FLOODED WITH 9-1-1 CALLS EVER SINCE THAT MILD EARTHQUAKE.
I'M NOT SURPRISED--
--IT NEARLY SHOOK ME OUT OF THE SHOWER.
HAVE YOU HEARD? SOMEONE BUSTED THE *JUGGERNAUT* OUT OVERNIGHT--BROKE RIGHT INTO THE ARMORY AND ABDUCTED HIM.
THE FEDS THINK *SPIDER-MAN'S* INVOLVED SOMEHOW.
SPIDER-MAN--?
UH-HUH. AND JUST AFTER DAWN--
--WE GOT REPORTS OF HIM PLAYING TAG WITH SOME FLYING DUDE ALONG THE WEST SIDE HIGHWAY.
THE TWO OF 'EM CRASHED THROUGH THE CHELSEA PIERS HEALTH CLUB. YEAH...

"...SPIDER-MAN'S BEEN A BUSY BOY! WE DON'T KNOW WHERE HE IS NOW--BUT THERE'RE A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO'D LIKE TO TALK WITH HIM..."

YOU NEVER SHOULD HAVE INTERFERED, SPIDER-MAN...

ATIMOR DEMOLITION KEEP OUT

...IT IS MY DESTINY AS *CAPTAIN UNIVERSE* TO DEAL WITH THE JUGGERNAUT.

THROUGH THE POWER INVESTED IN ME BY THE *ENIGMA FORCE*--

--I INTEND TO AVENGE ALL PARTIES WHO HAVE BEEN WRONGED BY THIS *MONSTER.*

HE--AND ALL THOSE WHO MIGHT AID HIM--MUST SUFFER!

THIS...IS... CRAZY...

...I SEEM TO RECALL... THAT THE UNI-POWER MANIFESTS A LITTLE DIFFERENTLY IN EACH CAPTAIN UNIVERSE...

...BUT I NEVER IMAGINED IT COULD DO SOMETHING THIS COSMIC.

YOU AIN'T BEATIN' *ME*...NOT THIS EASY...

I ALREADY HAVE. YOU ARE HELPLESS IN THIS REALM.

WHERE'D HE ZAP US TO? THIS PLACE... DOESN'T SEEM REAL.

MAYBE IT ISN'T. WHAT IF... IF IT'S ALL SOME KIND OF *HEAD TRIP* CAPTAIN UNIVERSE HAS LAID ON US...?

BETTER QUESTION: *HOW DO WE GET OUT OF HERE?*

With Greater Power...

EVEN IF THIS IS ALL IN OUR HEADS, THAT DOESN'T MAKE IT ANY LESS OF A THREAT. OR A PRISON.

PARDON ME, YOUR GREAT-AND-POWERFUL OZ-NESS--

--CAN'T WE TALK THIS OVER?

I DON'T BARGAIN WITH RENEGADES!

RENEGADE? WHO, *ME?*

WHAT, JUST BECAUSE I'M NOT OFFICIALLY REGISTERED WITH AND/OR SANCTIONED BY THE GOVERNMENT? AND I SUPPOSE YOU *ARE?*

NO...

BUT YOU ARE A *FOOL* FOR DEFENDING THE JUGGERNAUT. HE'S TRIED TO *KILL* YOU.

YOU KEEP SAYING THAT, LIKE YOU WERE THERE.

I *WAS* THERE.

HE RUINED MY LIFE.

I'LL *SHOW* YOU...

MY NAME WAS *WILLIAM NGUYEN*...

...AND I WAS ON THE FAST-TRACK WITH A MAJOR FINANCIAL FIRM--

--UNTIL THE TWO OF YOU BUTTED IN.

KRUMM

NOT THAT I BLAME YOU FOR THAT, SPIDER-MAN. YOU HAD BEEN TRYING TO STOP THE JUGGERNAUT.

HE WALKED THROUGH THE SIDE OF OUR BUILDING AND JUST KEPT GOING, LEAVING YOU FOR DEAD.

AND AFTER ALL THAT, YOU STILL PURSUED HIM. *YOU* SURVIVED...

BUT MY JOB DID NOT.

I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, WILL, BUT WITH ALL THE DAMAGES...

...WE'RE FORCED TO *DOWNSIZE.*

I'M SURE IT WILL JUST BE *TEMPORARY*...

IT *WASN'T* TEMPORARY.

I COULD NOT FIND WORK IN MY FIELD. BUT I LOST MORE THAN A CAREER...

I'M SORRY, WILL...I JUST DON'T SEE A FUTURE FOR US...

I WAS FORCED TO TAKE WHATEVER MENIAL JOBS I COULD FIND.

THANKS FOR VISITING COW-A-BUN-GA. WOULD YOU LIKE EXTRA KETCHUP...?

YEAH, SO YOUR LIFE SUCKED. *BIG DEAL!*

IT *WAS* A BIG DEAL. IT WAS A *VERY* BIG DEAL! IT WAS MY *LIFE!*

THINK YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO--?

YOU'RE NOT HELPING!

I WAS HELD UP--*TWICE!* I COULDN'T EVEN PAY MY RENT. I WAS OUT ON THE STREETS.

I THOUGHT I HAD NOTHING TO LIVE FOR...

YOU WERE GOING TO *KILL* YOURSELF? OVER *THAT?*

YOU *WIMP*, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT MISERY IS! IF YOU KNEW WHAT I'VE LIVED THROUGH--!

WHY DO I EVEN TRY...?

OH, REALLY?

WELL THEN, LET'S TAKE A *LOOK* IN THAT CESSPOOL YOU CALL A BRAIN.

WHAT? YOU CAN'T...! *HEY...*

"...THAT'S *ME*...WHEN I FOUND THE RUBY OF *CYTTORAK*...IN THAT KOREAN CAVE.

"IT TURNED ME INTO THE *JUGGERNAUT*... JUST AS THE CAVE CAME CRASHING DOWN. TOOK A LONG TIME TO DIG MY WAY OUT.

"BUT THAT WAS A WALK IN THE PARK--

"--COMPARED TO THE TRAP I FELL INTO THE FIRST TIME I FOUGHT THE WEB-HEAD.

"HE GOT ME CAUGHT IN FRESH CONCRETE AT A CONSTRUCTION SITE. IT WAS A *FOUNDATION POUR*...

"...DEEP AS HELL...

"...AND I SANK STRAIGHT TO THE BOTTOM.

"WHEN I FINALLY BOTTOMED OUT, I HAD TO DIG MY FEET INTO THE *BEDROCK* TO GET ANY TRACTION.

"I HAD TO FIGHT THROUGH THOUSANDS OF CUBIC FEET OF AGGREGATE--AND AFTER THAT, THROUGH *MILES* OF ROCK AND CLAY AND STONE.

"I DON'T NEED AIR, BUT IT STILL FELT SUFFOCATING.

"I DON'T NEED FOOD, BUT BY THE END, I WAS HUNGRY ENOUGH TO EAT *DIRT*.

"I PROMISED MYSELF THAT WHEN I GOT FREE, I'D GET REVENGE ON EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING! THAT WAS THE FIRST WEEK.

"AFTER THE SECOND WEEK, I WAS PROMISING TO CHANGE MY WHOLE LIFE.

"AFTER THE THIRD WEEK, I JUST WANTED OUT.

"CAN'T TELL YOU HOW MANY TIMES I ALMOST GAVE UP.

"IT WAS OVER A MONTH BEFORE I SAW THE LIGHT OF DAY.

"I CAME UP OUT OF THE HUDSON ON THE JERSEY SIDE, SOUTH OF FORT LEE.

"IN THAT MOMENT, I DIDN'T WANT TO FIGHT ANYONE. IT FELT GOOD JUST TO DRAW A BREATH."

IT TOOK YOU *HOW* LONG?

WOW.

I NEVER KNEW...

WAIT A MINUTE! JUGGY, DID YOU SAY YOU DUG INTO THE *BEDROCK*--?

ENOUGH! I DON'T WANT TO HEAR ANY MORE ABOUT YOUR *"ORDEAL,"* JUGGERNAUT.

YOU *ALWAYS* HAD THE POWER TO SURVIVE. I DID NOT...

...BUT AS I STOOD THERE, STARING DOWN AT THE EAST RIVER...

...I HAD SECOND THOUGHTS. BUT THE BRIDGE TOWER WAS SLIPPERY WITH RAIN--

--AND I LOST MY FOOTING.

IN THAT AWFUL MOMENT, I PRAYED FOR FORGIVENESS.

AND I WAS ANSWERED BY THE ENIGMA FORCE.

TRANSFORMED INTO CAPTAIN UNIVERSE, I FELT A POWER GREATER THAN I HAD EVER IMAGINED.

I WASN'T A HELPLESS DRONE ANY LONGER.

IN THAT INSTANT, I FELT I COULD BRING THE WHOLE WORLD INTO BALANCE, TO CLOSE OUT ALL WRONGS. AND I KNEW JUST WHERE TO START.

WITH MY NEWLY HEIGHTENED SENSES, IT TOOK ONLY A DAY TO TRACK YOU DOWN, JUGGERNAUT.

I HAD READ THAT ONCE YOU STARTED MOVING YOU COULD NOT BE STOPPED.

BUT EVEN YOU COULD BE TAKEN BY SURPRISE.

AND WITHOUT THE EARTH BENEATH YOUR FEET, THERE WAS NO WAY FOR YOU TO BEGIN A CHARGE.

FROM THE WAY YOU STRUGGLED AS WE CLEARED THE STRATOSPHERE, I REALIZED THAT YOU DIDN'T NEED AIR TO SURVIVE.

I BRIEFLY CONSIDERED LEAVING YOU TO DRIFT ENDLESSLY IN ORBIT.

BUT THAT WASN'T ENOUGH COMPENSATION FOR THE SUFFERING YOU HAD CAUSED ME.

I TRIED TO PROBE YOUR MIND, TO FIND YOUR WEAKNESSES, BUT YOUR HELMET WAS AN IMPEDIMENT. SO, I REACHED THROUGH ITS OPENINGS WITH THE UNI-POWER...

THEN, I THREW YOU BACK TO EARTH, SO THE WHOLE WORLD WOULD WITNESS YOUR DEFEAT.

THE UNI-POWER STAYED WITH ME. I WASN'T SURE WHY-- BUT I DECIDED TO *ENJOY* IT!

I HUNG A *DRUNK DRIVER* OUT TO DRY. THINGS LIKE THAT.

WHEN I LEARNED THAT YOU HAD SURVIVED, JUGGERNAUT, I TRACKED YOU TO THAT ARMORY.

I WOULD ALREADY BE DONE WITH YOU, BUT SPIDER-MAN INTERVENED--

--AND THE ENIGMA FORCE DIVERTED MY ATTENTION TO DAMAGED FAULTS WITHIN THE EARTH--!

HEY! I DON'T CARE HOW MUCH COSMIC POWER YOU HAVE NOW-- TO ME YOU'RE STILL A COWARDLY LITTLE *WIMP.*

HERE WE GO...

YOU WOULDN'T *DARE* FACE ME IN A FAIR FIGHT.

YOU WANT A FIGHT?

JUST LIKE THAT, WE'RE BACK ON EARTH. IF WE EVER LEFT IT.

SO BE IT!

ON YOUR FEET, JUGGERNAUT. ANY LAST WORDS?

SURE-- TELL ME WHERE TO SEND THE BODY.

WHOA! STOP! *TIME OUT!*

THIS IS NOT YOUR CONCERN, SPIDER-MAN.

JUST HEAR ME OUT, OKAY?

JUGGERNAUT NEVER *MEANT* TO MESS UP YOUR LIFE--!

THAT'S RIGHT. I WAS JUST TRYING TO LOSE THE WEB-HEAD. CUTTING THROUGH YOUR BUILDING WAS THE EASIEST WAY.

AND *THAT* MAKES IT ALL *RIGHT?!*

CAIN? SERIOUSLY, YOU'RE NOT HELPING.

LOOK, NONE OF US SOUGHT THE POWER WE HAVE. IT JUST *HAPPENED* TO US. WE'RE ALL HERE BY--

THIS TIME MY SPIDER-SENSE GIVES ME A WHOLE HALF-SECOND WARNING.

--ACCIDENT!

SMACK

MEEEB

Pier 60 Health Club.

SO THEN THE BLUE AND WHITE GUY WENT WHERE...?

OMIGOD!

IT'S ANOTHER EARTHQUAKE!

EVERYBODY STAY CALM!

HEAD FOR THE EMERGENCY EXITS!

LET'S MOVE!

GO!

THAT WAS A LOT WORSE THAN THE PREVIOUS TREMOR.

YOU DIDN'T FINISH THE REPAIR JOB-- DID YOU, CAPPY?

NO.

FIRST, THE JUGGERNAUT MUST DIE!

NOTHING ELSE...

...MATTERS?

YOU DISAPPOINT US.

NOW YOU'VE DONE IT...

WH-WHAT--?

I'D SAY YOU JUST OFFENDED THE ENIGMA FORCE.

HUNH! SOME HERO!

NO...I'VE LOST IT...I'VE LOST IT ALL AGAIN!

WE'VE ALL LOST.

WE STILL NEED A CAPTAIN UNIVERSE TO FIX THOSE FAULTS--!

I THINK...

...THAT'S BEEN ARRANGED.

YOU...?

HEY--!

I'LL DEAL WITH YOU TWO LATER.

I GOT WORK TO DO.

I DO NOT BELIEVE THIS.

THE ENIGMA FORCE PICKS *HIM* TO SAVE THE DAY? JUGGERNAUT?!

THAT'S LIKE HIRING THE THREE STOOGES TO RUN A GLASS FACTORY.

AND THEN HE GOES AND SEALS ME UP IN A FORCE SPHERE? SON OF A--!

DAMAGE TO THE TECTONIC PLATES BELOW MUST BE REPAIRED. IF NOT, A CATASTROPHIC EARTHQUAKE WILL RESULT.

WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO...?

REACH DOWN WITH THE UNI-POWER...FEEL THE FRACTURES IN THE PLATES...

WUNNGH!

WH-WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

NO WAY ARE WE WAITING AROUND FOR WHATEVER JUGGERNAUT HAS PLANNED NEXT.

I'M GETTING THIS OVERGROWN HAMSTER BALL ROLLING.

THESE JAGGED SURFACES...I...I CAUSED THIS...ALL THOSE MONTHS AGO.

YOU BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND.

ON YOUR FEET, NGUYEN.

RUN IN THE DIRECTION I RUN.

THE FRACTURES MUST BE HEALED. A DELICATE TOUCH IS NEEDED.

NOT MY STRONG SUIT.

WHY ARE WE BOUNCING--?

IT'S ANOTHER QUAKE!

Fifth Precinct.

FORENSICS. C-COOPER SPEAKING.

WHAT? I CAN BARELY HEAR YOU.

YES, IT'S SHAKING HERE, TOO!

NO, I DON'T KNOW WHY.

I DIDN'T THINK MANHATTAN HAD ANY FAULTS THAT WERE THIS ACTIVE.

YOU MUST EASE BETWEEN THE PLATES

I'M USED TO SMASHING WHATEVER'S IN MY PATH.

THEN YOU MUST EXERCISE EVEN GREATER CARE

LOOK OUT! *LOOK OUT!*

WILL YOU *SHUT UP?* I'M TRYING TO SAVE OUR BUTTS!

VIOLENT STRESSES HAVE BUILT UP WITHIN THE PLATES, WHERE THE FRACTURES HAVE LOCKED TOGETHER.

CHANNEL THE UNI-POWER YOU MUST SMOOTH THOSE EDGES.

LIKE THIS...?

WHAT I REALLY NEED IS TO GET *OUT* OF THIS FORCE BUBBLE.

AND I THINK I SEE A WAY!

WHY ARE YOU FILLING THE BALL WITH WEBBING? YOU'LL *SMOTHER* US!

NO, I'M *INSULATING* US.

FROM WHAT?

FROM THAT BIG *ELECTRICAL TRANSFORMER.* DEAD AHEAD.

ZZZAKOW

HANG ON!

SEE? THAT WASN'T SO BAD.

COME ON, WE GOTTA GET YOU OUTTA HERE BEFORE...

BOOM

I FINISHED THE JOB THAT YOU ABANDONED, NGUYEN.

TOO LATE.

NOW THERE'S JUST ONE THING LEFT TO SETTLE.

CAIN, NO! YOU DON'T WANT TO DO THIS!

SAYS WHO?

LISTEN TO ME! YOU MANNED UP AND SAVED THE CITY. YOU'RE THE HERO NOW--DON'T BLOW IT!

HE'S THE HERO...?

I GIVE UP.

YOU WIN.

GUYS LIKE YOU ALWAYS WIN.

GO AHEAD. KILL ME, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT.

CAIN...

...DON'T DO IT.

I'M SORRY, KID.

FOR EVERYTHING.

WELL DONE JUGGERNAUT

THE ENIGMA FORCE IS NO LONGER NEEDED HERE.

YOU'RE RIGHT, WEBS.

WE'RE *ALL* HERE BY ACCIDENT.

YEAH. BUT WHAT WE DO *AFTERWARDS*... THAT'S WHAT MATTERS.

SOUNDS LIKE YOU LEARNED THAT THE HARD WAY.

I DID. A LONG TIME AGO.

HUH...?

WEO-WEO-WEO

POLICE'LL BE HERE SOON, NGUYEN. IT'S GONNA BE OKAY.

OKAY? *OKAY?!* I SCREWED UP-- *AGAIN!*

I'M A FAILURE...A *LOSER--!*

ARE YOU *KIDDING?*

YOU TOOK ON THE JUGGERNAUT--

--AND YOU GOT AN *APOLOGY* FROM HIM!

THAT'S LIKE WINNING THE *LOTTERY.*

Several Weeks Later...

I SURVIVED THE JUGGERNAUT
WILL NGUYEN

WELCOME BACK TO PM NEW YORK...

...WE'RE TALKING WITH WILL NGUYEN, AUTHOR OF THE UPCOMING BOOK, *I SURVIVED THE JUGGERNAUT*--

--WHICH IS ALREADY NUMBER ONE ON AMAZON.

SO I'M TOLD.

BUT DESPITE THE BIG ADVANCE ORDERS ON THE BOOK, YOU SAY THAT YOU DON'T EXPECT TO GET RICH...?

THAT'S RIGHT, RENALDO. I AVOIDED GOING TO TRIAL FOR THE DAMAGE I DID AS CAPTAIN UNIVERSE--ONLY THROUGH THE HARD WORK OF MY ATTORNEY, MATTHEW MURDOCK.

MISTER MURDOCK CONVINCED THE JUDGE THAT I WAS OVERWHELMED BY ALL THAT POWER--AND *I WAS*--

--BUT I STILL FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR MY ACTIONS. SO I'VE EARMARKED THE BOOK'S PROFITS FOR MAKING RESTITUTION.

AND WITH THE FUNDS LEFT OVER, I'LL BE SETTING UP A FOUNDATION TO HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE AS DOWN ON THEIR LUCK AS I WAS.

I JUST WANT TO TELL MY STORY, TO MAKE THINGS RIGHT, AND TO START OVER.

YOU'VE HEARD OF PEOPLE GETTING A SECOND CHANCE? WELL, THIS IS LIKE MY THIRD CHANCE AT LIFE...

...AND I'M DETERMINED NOT TO BLOW IT.

GOOD FIRST STEP, WILL...

...ACKNOWLEDGING THE RESPONSIBILITY THAT COMES WITH THE POWER. AND NO ONE HAD TO DIE TO SHOW YOU THAT. I WASN'T SO LUCKY.

WHEN I FIRST BECAME SPIDER-MAN, I WAS SO RECKLESS, SO STUPIDLY SELF-CENTERED...

...AND MY SELFISHNESS COST MY UNCLE BEN--!

PETER! READY TO GO?

CARLIE! SURE. I-I...

...I WAS JUST CATCHING UP ON CURRENT AFFAIRS.

THAT GUY WHO BECAME CAPTAIN UNIVERSE?

WOW...WHAT MUST IT BE LIKE, TO HAVE THAT KIND OF POWER? I CAN'T IMAGINE, CAN YOU?

OH, I DON'T KNOW... I HAVE A PRETTY GOOD IMAGINATION, MS. COOPER.

MAYBE I CAN...

EST. 1962

End.

CHECK OUT *BUILD-A-BEAR.*

HA. THAT'S GOOD.

HEY, *BUILD-A-BEAR!*

WHAT'S IN THE *BAG,* BUILD-A-BEAR?

YOU GONNA BUILD A B--

YOU KNOW WHO YOU'RE *MESSIN'* WITH, PUNK?

GRAAAAR!

EVER HEAR OF THE *ABSORBING MAN?*

DON'T GO *AWAY!* I AIN'T DONE WITH YOU *YET!*

THE UNEMPLOYED PETER PARKER IN:

Brother, Can You Spare A Crime?

MARK WAID & TOM PEYER	TODD NAUCK	ANDRES MOSSA	VC's JOE CARAMAGNA
WRITER	ARTIST	COLORIST	LETTERER

KLIK

--TRAFFIC SNARL IN THE WEST FORTIES RESULTING FROM AN UNSPECIFIED DISTURBANCE. AFTER THE BREAK...

11:58 AM

...WE'LL TAKE A LOOK AT DISGRACED CITY HALL PHOTOGRAPHER PETER PARK--

THWIPP

THIS IS *NEWS?* I SACRIFICED *MY* CAREER TO SAVE *J. JONAH JAMESON'S WEEKS* AGO. GET *OVER* IT.

AND I'VE BEEN +YAWN+ SWINGING THE STREETS AS *SPIDEY* UNTIL ALL HOURS SO I DON'T HAVE TO FACE THE *REALITY:*

I'M *RECORD-SETTING BROKE.* I'VE BEEN CASH-FREE *BEFORE,* BUT I COULD *ALWAYS* SELL A *NEWS PHOTO* FOR *LUNCH MONEY.*

NOW EVERYONE ASSUMES *EVERY* PIC I TAKE IS BOGUS. I'M *BLACKLISTED*--SO LIKE *ONE MILLION OTHER* NEW YORKERS, I'VE GOTTA FIND A--

JOB!

MY *JOB INTERVIEW!* IT'S IN *HALF AN HOUR!*

MiSTie O's

NO PULP

BETTY CALLED IN A *FAVOR* TO GET ME THIS INTERVIEW, AND I'VE *GOTTA MAKE IT!* BARELY ENOUGH TIME TO *FAKE* A *SHOWER--*

--BUT IF I START SWINGING *NOW*, I'LL MAKE *GREAT* TIME--

GHAAH! DOWN TO *SIX* WEB CARTRIDGES? I CAN'T AFFORD TO WASTE A *SINGLE WEBLINE!*

NOT UNTIL I FIND SOME WAY TO PAY FOR A *NEW BATCH!* I WON'T TAKE MONEY FROM *AUNT MAY*...ALL MY *PALS* ARE *TAPPED*, AND ME WITHOUT EVEN A *METROCARD*...

JUST HAVE TO *HOP ROOFTOPS*, PRAY I *GET* THERE IN TIME--

"--AND HOPE *NOTHING* GETS IN MY *WAY!*"

WHEN WILL YOU STUPID FREAKING *NORMALS* LEARN TO LEAVE ME *ALONE?*

DO I HAVE TO *TEACH* YOU?

DO I?

PARKER? *FRANK WELLS,* UTILITY SALES & FINANCE. GLAD I *CAUGHT* YOU.

LISTEN, I CAN'T GET TO THE OFFICE FOR YOUR INTERVIEW. TRAFFIC ISN'T *MOVING.* WE'LL HAVE TO *RESCHEDULE* FOR *NEXT WEEK.*

AAH. REALLY? AAHH.

NOTHING I CAN DO. THIS CAR CAN'T FLY.

WELL...IS THERE ANY WAY WE COULD DO THIS OVER THE *PHONE?* WOULD YOU *MIND?* I *DID* CLEAR THE TIME...

YEAH, RIGHT. YOU UNEMPLOYED ARE SO *BUSY.*

EH. LONG AS I GOTTA *SIT* HERE, MIGHT AS WELL. LET ME GET MY *QUESTIONS* OUT...

SORRY THESE SOUND KINDA CLICHE, BUT I GOTTO GO STRAIGHT BY THE HUMAN RESOURCES PLAYBOOK. OKAY, TELL ME ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS EXPERIENCE.

I... UMMM...

...I SOLD BAND CANDY IN HIGH SCHOOL.

ARE YOU TAKING THIS SERIOUSLY? BECAUSE WE DON'T HAVE TO DO IT. PARKER?

SPIDER-MAN!

AWWW, NO...!

PARKER! I'M HANGING UP--

NO, MR. WELLS, *DON'T! PLEASE!*

I--I JUST HAD A BAD *CONNECTION* FOR A MOMENT, BUT IT'S UNDER CONTROL! LET'S KEEP *GOING*, OKAY?

SORRY. DROPPED MY PAPERS. THEY'RE ALL MIXED UP. THESE MAY BE OUTTA ORDER, SO STAY SHARP. WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN FIVE YEARS?

DEAD.

UMMM... ALWAYS OVERCOMING OBSTACLES.

UH-HUH. AND WHAT ARE YOUR *SKILL SETS?*

I'M A PROBLEM SOLVER. RESOURCEFUL. I THINK QUICKLY ON MY FEET.

THAT'S WHAT I LIKE FROM MY SALESMEN. TELL ME, HOW WOULD YOU HANDLE AN IRATE CUSTOMER?

PATIENTLY. BUT HEAD-ON. NO PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE STUFF.

GOOD. AND WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IS YOUR WORST QUALITY?

I... GUESS I...

HNNNGH!

...I CARE TOO MUCH.

I'M ALWAYS JUGGLING A TON OF RESPONSIBILITY--

OMIGOD! I JUST SAW SPIDER-MAN CATCH AN ARMORED CAR!

WHAT?

WHERE ARE YOU?

8TH AND 45TH.

W45 ST

HE'S HERE! HE'S LOOKING RIGHT AT ME!

PARKER, CAN YOU HEAR ME? SAY SOMETHING, OR I'M HANGING UP!

-SIGH-

PARKER?

OH, FORGET YOU. WHO'S NEXT ON MY LIST TO CALL...?

CRUSHER CREEL!

YOU JUST POSSIBLY COST ME A JOB I NEED--

--AND YOU JUST *DEFINITELY* COST ME ABOUT $7.50 WORTH OF *WEB FLUID!*

I'M JUST GETTIN' *STARTED!* I DIDN'T BUST JAIL JUST TA *NICKEL-AND-DIME* MY WAY TA--

HEY! WHAT'D YOU DO TO ME, YOU DIRTY MUMUGGGHH-UGHH-UGGH

I'M RUBBER, YOU'RE GLUE.

GHUUUH-UHH-UHH

WHAT--?

OH. IT'S *YOU.*

THANKS, SPIDER-MAN! I'LL TAKE IT FROM HERE!

OH, SURE! NOW! WHERE WERE YOU TWO MINUTES AGO?

AND CAN I BORROW SOME CARFARE?

SORRY! DON'T HAVE MY WALLET WITH ME!

AGAIN? FIND A NEW EXCUSE, WILLYA?

WELL, GREAT.

MY ONE GOOD SUIT IS TORN TO BITS... I COULDN'T EVEN LAND A JOB SELLING... SELLING...

...Y'KNOW, I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT I WAS GONNA BE SELLING...

...AND NOW PETER PARKER HAS TO GO APOLOGIZE TO BETTY BRANT FOR BURNING A BRIDGE AND HOPE SHE'LL BUY ME LUNCH!

JUST ANOTHER DAY IN THE JOB-HUNTING LIFE OF THE AMAZING UNEMPLOYED PETER PARKER!

HOW'M I EVER GONNA FIND A STEADY PAYCHECK AND KEEP GOING AS SPIDER-MAN? SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE...AND SOON...!

The End

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #6
"GAUNLET ORIGINS: LIZARD"

GAUNTLET: ORIGINS

LIZARD

Florida.
Several Years Ago.

HAVE YOU BEEN TO THIS PLACE BEFORE?

EVEN IF YOU HAD A *MOUTH*, YOU COULD NOT *SAY*.

YOUR MUCK-ENCRUSTED MIND IS NOT BUILT FOR *MEMORY*.

Fred Van Lente writer
Jefte Palo artist
Javier Rodriguez colors
VC's Joe Caramagna letters

INSTEAD YOU REGISTER *EMPATHIC IMPRESSIONS*-- EMOTIONAL RADIANCES THAT REPEL OR *ATTRACT*, DEPENDING ON TENOR OR INTENSITY.

IN RARE CASES, YOU CAN PICK UP THE RESIDUE OF PASSIONS LONG SINCE *PAST*.

HERE IS ONE SUCH RARITY.

A FURIOUS *BATTLE* TOOK PLACE IN THIS PLACE OF UNYIELDING STONE AMIDST THE EVER-SHIFTING, ALWAYS-FLEETING SWAMP.

TWO MEN POSSESSED OF GREAT POWER, AND GREATER *LOSS*, LOCKED IN MORTAL COMBAT.

EACH BELIEVING *HIS* CAUSE TO BE THE MORE *JUST*.

AS THEY *ALWAYS* DO.

THIS IS WHERE YOU GET SO *MUDDLED* WITH MEN. THEIR PRECIOUS *REASONS*.

THEY CLING TO THEM SO *FIERCELY*, AS IF THEY WERE THEIR OWN *CHILDREN*.

BUT YOU, FOR WHOM LIFE IS A PSYCHIC *FREQUENCY* VARYING ONLY IN ITS EMOTIONAL *OSCILLATIONS*, KNOW HOW *SUPERFLUOUS* THEY TRULY ARE.

Baghdad.
Years Before That.

PEOPLE *LIKE* TO KILL, SO THEY *KILL.*

CALL IT IN, WE FOUND THE MISSING PATROL--

OTHERS LIKE TO *HELP.*

DOC! GET BACK HERE! WE GOTTA MAKE SURE THE AREA'S NOT *HOT*--

ONE'S MOVING!

SO THEY'LL RISK *EVERYTHING* TO DO SO...

LEAN BACK AND RELAX, SOLDIER. *DOCTOR CURT* IS HERE TO TAKE YOU ON A SCENIC TRIP DOWN *MORPHINE HIGHWAY.*

NOOO-- DON'T--

I APPRECIATE THE *CONCERN,* PRIVATE, BUT I SWEAR I'M TOTALLY *DESENSITIZED* TO THE SIGHT OF BLOOD AT THIS POINT.

RRR-IPPP--

NO-- BEFORE THEY LEFT-- *INSURGENTS--*

...*EVERYTHING,* UP TO, AND INCLUDING, LIFE...

--BOOBY-TRAPPED--

...AND LIMB.

DASHDGHS AGDHASGDHJ SAHJDGHSAJDG

KGJH YIJHLIYJLITHJ EHGRHJGEW EF

...THE QUESTION *IS*, REALLY, WHICH IS MORE *COST-EFFECTIVE*:

"TEACHING" MUSCLE AND BONE TO BE AS *"SMART"* AS *SKIN*...

...OR IMPLANTING POLYMER FIBERS IN TISSUE TO *GUIDE* CELLS IN REGENERATION POST-INJURY, LIKE AN *AMPHIBIAN* OR A--

NANO-SCAFFOLDING... YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT...
WHOA!
GET A NURSE-- HE'S COMING TO!
WHERE AM I...?
YOU'RE IN A CASH*, BROTHER--TAKE IT EASY!
CONNORS, RIGHT? THE HERO MEDIC? WHERE'D YOU HEAR ABOUT NANO-SCAFFOLDING?
*C.S.H., OR COMBAT SUPPORT HOSPITAL. --GEN. BRENNAN
WAS WORKING...FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH AT U.F... UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA... BEFORE MY RESERVE UNIT GOT CALLED UP...
IT WAS JUST...BIOTECH GEEK STUFF THEN, MISTER... UH...
DOCTOR, SAME AS YOU, PAL. TED SALLIS. MY TEAM AND I ARE IN THE TOMORROW'S-SOLDIER-TODAY BUSINESS.
HELL, STATESIDE, I'D HIRE YOU. U.F.'S PROGRAM IS ONE OF THE BEST, AND CELL REGENERATION IS JUST ONE OF THE BELLS & WHISTLES IN "CAPTAIN AMERICA 2.0"...
ONLY WISH... WE COULD DO SOMETHING FOR VETS LIKE YOU NOW...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHY WOULD I NEED...?
OH...DAMN, I'M SORRY-- I THOUGHT YOU KNEW--
NURSE! I NEED HELP HERE!!
AHHHHH...
AHHHHHHH!!

THAT SCREAM-- THE PIERCING, ALL-ENCOMPASSING *HORROR* OF IT-- THAT'S ALL YOU'VE RETAINED OF THE MOMENT.

NOTHING ELSE.

WHY HAS IT COME BACK TO YOU NOW?

IS IT KIN TO THE EMANATIONS YOU ENCOUNTER IN THIS PLACE? OR *SOURCE?*

AND NOW *THIS?*

MOST WOULD NAME THIS "*HORROR.*"

BUT IS THIS HAPPENING *NOW*, OR IS THIS JUST ANOTHER SET OF DISTANT IMPRESSIONS?

NO!

NOW!

THIS IS HAPPENING NOW!!

WAIT--DO NOT ATTACK EACH--

AH... NO...

THISSSS DEFORMED MONSTROSSSSSSITY IS NOT ONE OF MY CREATIONSSSSS, ISSSSSS IT?

THEN END HIS EXISTENCCCCCCCCE. I CANNOT WASSSSTE THIS MOMENT.

KRRAAAKKAA

FOR ONCCCCCE I SHED THE SSSSSKIN OF MAN AND I SSSSSMELL NO SSSSSSPIDER TO OPPOSSSSE ME...

ALLOWING ME TO RETURN TO THE SSSSSSIGHT OF OUR FIRSSSSST BATTLE...

FINISH ADDING MY SSSSSSERUM TO THE SSSSSWAMP...

CREATE ENOUGH OF MY KIND...

TO OVERRUN THE MAMMALSSSSS IN THEIR NESSSSSTS...

SERUM...IN THE SWAMP...

YOU DIDN'T HAVE THE *BUDGET* TO ADD ANOTHER RESEARCHER, SO CONNORS COBBLED INVESTORS TOGETHER AND BEGAN WORK ON CELL REGENERATION *HIMSELF.*

THE *SALAMANDER* CULTURES ARE PRODUCING *BLASTEMA* JUST FINE, TED, BUT I CAN'T GET THE A.E.C. TO SIGNAL *FIBRO-BLASTS*, NO MATTER HOW HARD I--

CURT, CURT-- HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO *TELL* YOU, BUDDY?

TO GET THE RIGHT SYNTHESIS OF EXTRACELLULAR MATRIX AND COLLAGEN, TRY *LIZARD CELLS*--

WITH A LITTLE *FRIENDLY ENCOURAGEMENT.*

APICAL EPITHELIAL CAP.

FRIENDSHIP.

SNAAPPP

AN EMOTION *ALIEN* TO THIS CREATURE. LIKE ALL *OTHERS.*

USELESSSSSS!!

FOR ITS MIND *PREDATES* THE EVOLUTION OF *FEELING.*

TO YOU, ITS EMOTIONAL STATE-- ITS *LACK THEREOF*-- IS AS HARSH AND UNYIELDING AS A *VACUUM.*

AND AS *ABHORRENT* TO *NATURE.*

INSTINCTUALLY YOU LASH OUT TO ERASE IT, FOR THE SLIME OF YOUR SUBSTANCE IS AS CLOSE TO THAT OF THE SWAMP'S AS IF YOU HAD BOTH BEEN *FORMED* BY NATURE...

...AS YOUR ASSAILANT LEARNS THE *HARD WAY* BY TRYING TO *CONSTRICT* AROUND YOUR VISCOUS FORM.

GLOOOORRRRRPPP

YOU... DO NOT SSSSSSSMELL LIKE MAMMAL, CREATURE...

YET... THERE IS THE SSSSSSTINK OF THE FAMILIAR ABOUT YOU...

...WHICH MUST BE SSSSSNUFFED OUT!

BUT NATURE IS *BLAMELESS* IN YOUR CREATION, ISN'T SHE?

YOU WERE SCULPTED SOLELY BY THE HANDS OF *MAN.*

YOU KNOW... MY PAL CURT MAY BE ON THE VERGE OF SOMETHING *BIG*-- SOMETHING WE CAN *USE.*

NOW THAT WE'RE ALMOST AT *HUMAN TRIALS,* THE BRASS HAVE BEEN MAKING NOISES ABOUT RELOCATING US SOMEWHERE *SECLUDED...*

ELLEN, BABY, HOW DOES AN *EVERGLADES* VACATION SOUND TO YOU?

I'M MORE A *MIAMI BEACH* KIND OF GAL, TEDDY...

NO *DOUBT,* BUT IN THE *SWAMP* I'LL BE CLOSER TO *CONNORS,* JUST IN CASE I CAN HELP HIM...AND *VICE VERSA...*

WAS IT *LOVE* WITH ELLEN? NO.

LUST. A MORE PRIMITIVE, *INTENSE* EMOTION.

NOT UNLIKE *BETRAYAL.*

TURNS OUT ELLEN WAS WORKING FOR *ADVANCED IDEA MECHANICS* ALL ALONG.

HOW FAR UP THE PROJECT HAD A.I.M. *PENETRATED?* YOU HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING.

YOU DECIDED TO MAKE A RUN FOR IT TO *CONNORS'* PLACE-- THEY COULDN'T HAVE GOTTEN TO *HIM,* TOO--

IRONICALLY, SINCE YOU HAD RELOCATED TO THE SWAMP, YOU HAD *LOST TOUCH* WITH HIM OVER THE LAST FEW MONTHS--

--HOW *HAD* HIS CELL REGENERATION PROJECT TURNED OUT?

ALL YOU KNEW WAS THAT YOU HAD *CAPTAIN AMERICA 2.0* IN A *NEEDLE...*

...AND *ONE* GOOD PLACE TO *HIDE* IT IN.

ALTHOUGH YOU MIGHT HAVE CHOSEN A BETTER TIME TO DO IT THAN DRIVING SEVENTY-FIVE MILES AN HOUR THROUGH A SWAMP WITH YOUR HEADLIGHTS OFF.

SSSSSSTRANGE...

WHAT COULD I HAVE RECOGNIZED IN YOU...

...OTHER THAN THAT THE MAMMALSSSSS WOULD CALL USSSSS BOTH MONSSSSTERSSSS...

...IF WE LEFT THEM BREATH ENOUGH TO SSSSSSSPEAK...

WHAAAAMMMM

ARGGHH!!

YOU DROVE INTO THE WATER AS A *MAN*.

A *FOOLISH* MAN, A MAN RACKED WITH *GUILT* WHO SAW BATTLEFIELD *DEAD* IN HIS *SLEEP*, BUT A *MAN* NONETHELESS.

BUT *IN* THE SWAMP, THE SERUM COURSING THROUGH YOUR VEINS REACTED WITH CHEMICALS ALREADY *IN* THE WATER...

...PLACED THERE BY WHAT WAS TO YOU, AT THE TIME, AN *UNKNOWN SOURCE.*

TWO *WARRING BRANDS* OF CELL REGENERATION THAT *DID NOT MIX.*

YOU WENT *INTO* THE SWAMP A MAN.

YOU *CAME OUT* A SHAMBLING MOCKERY OF A *MAN-THING.*

THAT *SSSSSSSSMELL...* NO...

I KNOW YOU...

CONNORSSSSSSS KNOWS YOU--

TED SALLISSSSSSS!

YOUR NAME IS TED SALLISSSSSSSS--

THAT *SENSE-MEMORY* TRIGGERS IN THE LIZARD-THING A DISTANT RECOGNITION OF A THING CALLED *COMPASSION,* WHICH HE ONCE SHOWED *AND* RECEIVED--

--THE *HIGHER* EMOTIONS OF THE *MAMMALIAN* SIDE OF HIM HE STILL DESPISES AND *FEARS*--

--AND WHATEVER KNOWS FEAR BURNS AT YOUR TOUCH!

EEEEEYAAAAAHHHHH!!

THE LIZARD-THING NOW *RADIATES* EMOTION.

NONE OF IT *GOOD*, BUT THAT IS IRRELEVANT. THE VACUUM HAS BEEN FILLED.

YOUR PURPOSE, ACCOMPLISHED.

YOU LOOK UP AT THIS HEAP OF UNYIELDING STONE AMIDST THE EVER-SHIFTING, ALWAYS-FLEETING SWAMP.

AND YOU WONDER:

HAVE YOU BEEN TO THIS PLACE BEFORE?

End

The Lizard, it could be said, comes from darkness.

A time before human perception had shone its light on the blackness of prehistory.

A place when base chemical processes struggle toward complexity.

RNA begets DNA. DNA begets cells. Cells beget nerves.

Nerves clump together to form the control center for a new breed of biological machine.

The Earth's first animals think the Earth's first thoughts. Undiluted INTENTION booms from their simple brains like orders from an invisible TYRANT.

The commands are simple:

EAT!

CHASE!

And, slaves to their impulses, the creatures obey.

EAT!

FLEE!

MATE!

KILL!

The tyrant's voice echoes through MILLENNIA. And, spurred on by their master, the animals change to better serve their master.

Finally, in the Jurassic era, the TYRANT takes its name from the creatures who most perfectly express its will.

The REPTILE BRAIN reigns supreme.

But its subjects, like overeager slaves, continue to change.

Deep in the tyrant's kingdom, there are signs of revolt.

A web of neurons descend on the simple brain, a wrinkled phalanx of THOUGHT come to muffle its reptilian instincts.

The tyrant does not go quietly. It screams its muffled influence whenever possible.

EAT!

MATE!

KILL!

But this new breed of animal, basking in the light of consciousness, answers each command with a question:

WHY?

The question has power.

Using it they flavor their instincts with meaning. The tyrant's order to MATE is diluted by concepts of ROMANCE...LOVE.

WHY?

The question gives birth to science.

And with science the REPTILE BRAIN is finally branded an artifact, categorized, and unseated from its throne.

The tyrant is put to sleep.

And with science, thousands of years later...

I wake him up.

An arm grows. But it is not my arm.

A rage grows. But it is not my rage.

Millennia of frustrated instinct is given form.

The TYRANT reclaiming my body and wages war on the mammals.

In the neo-cortex I hide, taking refuge in the mammalian throne. The reptile tests our boundary, hungry for conquest.

Only with help do I hold the line.

Over the years that boundary is tested. But today the line still holds.

I am Curt Connors. Mammal. Human.

I'm paid to exploit the reptile brain with drugs. Perhaps I have a point to prove.

A few months into the job I find myself eating alone, anxious when others approach my food.

I become intensely TERRITORIAL about my lab. Other males agitate me. I'm possessive of the females.

Something is wrong. I order a CAT scan.

My situation is obvious.

The R-Complex is swollen, agitated, putting pressure on the neocortex.

Simply put--

--the Lizard wants out.

I have to see my son. Reptiles don't rear their children. Billy proves that I'm human.

That won't be possible today, she tells me. She has no expression on her face.

Billy's been having nightmares.

He draws pictures.

They'll rule on future visits in the next few days. Her expression never changes.

Primates use facial expression to communicate emotion. Does she sense the lizard inside me?

Does she know it has no interest in raising my young? That it sees the small as weak and the weak as food?

Do they all know?

Does my boss, Mr. King, know when he challenges me with his unearned authority...

...that The Lizard wants nothing more than to force a gurgle of crimson acquiescence from his mangled throat?

Does Marissa know when she smiles and waves...

...that The Lizard wants to smell her with his tongue, taking her as a mate if deemed worthy?

No...I'm the only one that knows.

So I wait for them to leave.

I work in darkness.

The Lizard wants out.

It's time I stopped ignoring him.

SHED
PRELUDE

ZEB WELLS WRITER XURXO PENALTA ARTIST
MATT HOLLINGSWORTH COLOR ART JARED K. FLETCHER LETTERS
TOM BRENNAN ASST. EDITOR STEPHEN WACKER EDITOR

SHED: PROLOGUE

ZEB WELLS - WRITER
CHRIS BACHALO - ART
VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA - LETTERS

THEY'RE AT IT AGAIN...

Phelcorp Industries.

THAT'S FIVE MATINGS IN AS MANY HOURS. THEY'RE LIKE ***NEWLYWEDS***...DR. CONNORS, DID YOU JUST MAKE TWO LIZARDS FALL IN LOVE?

I BELIEVE I'VE REPLICATED THE HORMONE RESPONSIBLE FOR AROUSAL IN THE REPTILIAN BRAIN. IF THESE CREATURES POSSESSED A NEOCORTEX, PERHAPS THEY WOULD PERCEIVE ITS EFFECT AS "LOVE."

IF THE HORMONE AFFECTS SIMILAR BRAIN STRUCTURES IN HUMAN BEINGS, WE'LL KNOW SOON ENOUGH.

I'M OPTIMISTIC, MARISSA. THE CEREBRAL CORTEX ENGULFED OUR BRAIN STEMS OVER MILLENNIA, BUT STRIP IT AWAY AND WE'RE STILL REMARKABLY SIMILAR TO THE REPTILES.

YOU COULD SAY WE'RE ALL JUST LIZARDS IN MONKEY SUITS.

THAT'S WHY WE HAVE TO BE SURE THESE HORMONES DON'T TANGENTIALLY EXCITE OTHER SECTIONS OF THE R-COMPLEX.

THERE'S SUCH A THING AS BEING TOO REPTILIAN, BELIEVE ME.

DOC CONNORS SAID NO ONE'S S'POSED TO GO IN THERE, MR. KING.

I DIDN'T ASK, RANDOM EMPLOYEE.

AN EXCITED R-COMPLEX CAN CAUSE TERRITORIALISM AND A HYPERSENSITIVITY TO SOCIAL HIERARCHIES.

LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS TO THIS DOCILE SUBJECT WHEN A YOUNGER MALE IS INTRODUCED TO HIS TERRARIUM.

CONNORS.

BRIAN, THIS IS A CLOSED EXPERIMENT...

THAT WE'RE PAYING FOR. RELAX.

MORE LIZARDS? I THOUGHT WE WERE MOVING ON TO *HUMAN* TRIALS...

I NEVER GUARANTEED A START DATE.

YOU ORDERED HOMOPHILIC DELIVERY MEDIUMS FOR THE HORMONES MONTHS AGO. UPSTAIRS.

THAT TYPE OF EXPENDITURE IS MOST DEFINITELY SEEN AS A "*GUARANTEE.*"

HURF!

I SET THE PACE OF RESEARCH IN MY LAB--

THIS IS PHELCORP'S LAB, DR. CONNORS...

HURF

...DON'T TEST THE LIMITS OF YOUR AUTHORITY.

HURF!

NOT IF YOU WANT TO KEEP BUYING FANCY SILK TIES FOR YOUR VISITS WITH YOUR SON...

Y-YOU'RE INVADING MY PERSONAL SPACE, BRIAN. I WON'T STAND FOR IT...

HURF

YOU WON'T? LET'S TALK LIKE BIG BOYS, CONNORS. THE SECOND WE THINK YOU'VE STOPPED MAKING PROGRESS, YOUR SCIENTIFIC CAREER IS OVER.

YOU'RE THE DEFINITION OF UNEMPLOYABLE.

BITE HAND CHEW EYES

YOU THINK THERE'S ANOTHER COMPANY ON THE *PLANET* THAT'S GOING TO LET YOU GET WITHIN FIFTY YARDS OF A LIZARD?

GRRAAAK!!

GIVE KING RED SMILE KAHN RRS

E-EXCUSE ME.

NO RUN KAHN ARRS

THIS CONVERSATION ISN'T OVER, CONNORS...

OH, MY GOD...

LET COLD ONE GIVE KING SLEEP

MAKE KING NECK SAY RED KAHN RRS

WHERE IS IT?!

LET COLD ONE SEE SUN KAHN RRS

NO NO NO NO

NO, NO, NO.

COLD ONE NO RUN KAHN RRS.

NO NO NO NO.

YOU'RE FINE, CURT...

THERE'S NO NEED FOR THAT...

KING'S GONE...

COLD ONE STEAL CONNORS WARMTH

THERE'S NO NEED FOR THAT...

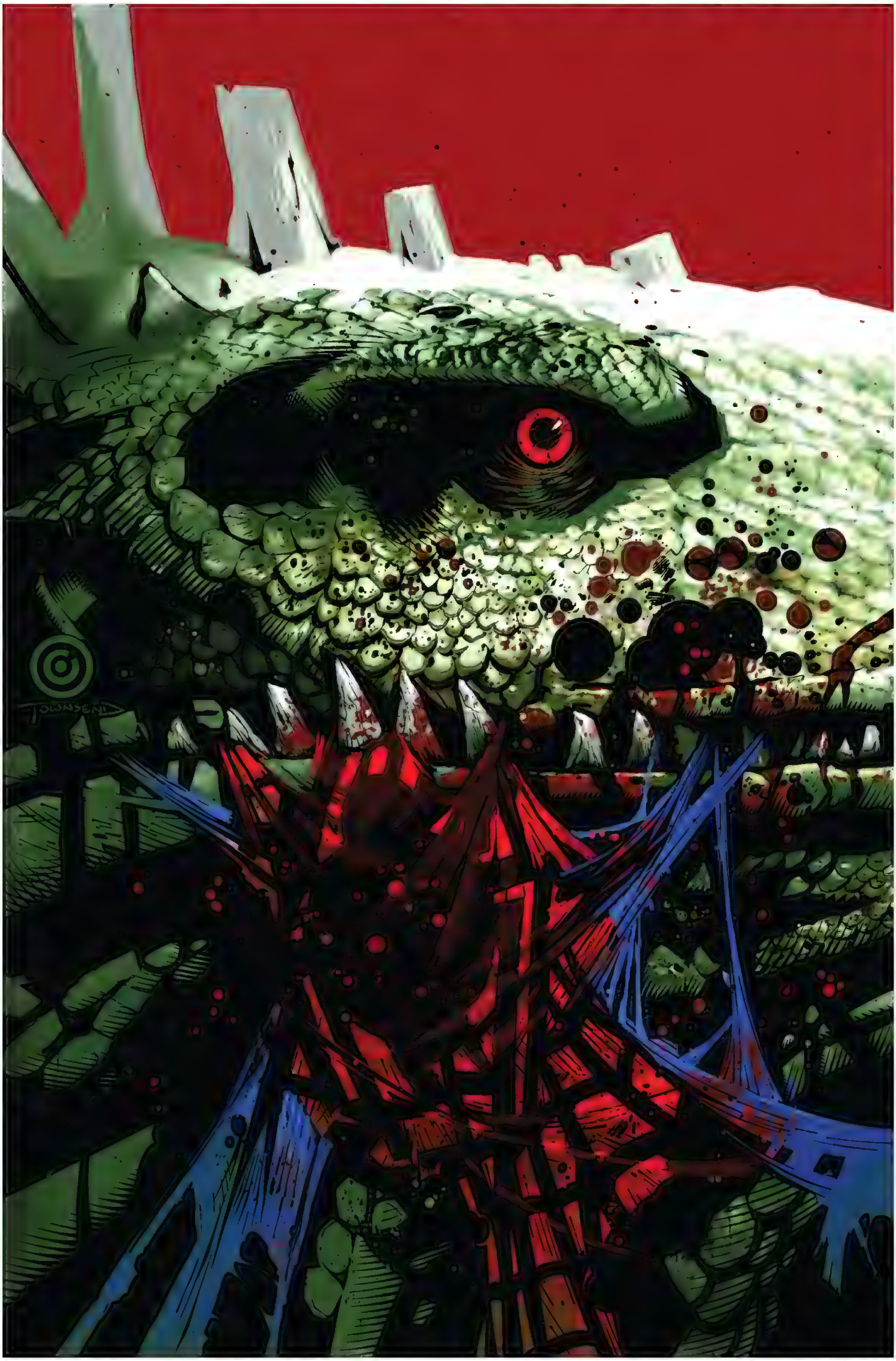
NO NEED FOR THAT...

HURF

HURF!

HURF

SHED BEGINS IN ONE WEEK!



AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #630

I ALREADY KNEW WHAT I WAS GOING TO SAY, IS WHAT'S TERRIBLE ABOUT IT.

WE'D TAKE OUT THE GUYS IN THE BACK AND WHEN WE GOT TO THE DROP POINT SOMEONE WOULD NOTICE THEY WERE GONE, AND I'D JUMP OUT AND SAY...

"THEY MUST HAVE FALLEN OFF THE BACK OF A TRUCK."

SEE BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT THESE MOB TYPES ALWAYS SAY ABOUT THE JUNK THEY STEAL FROM TRUCKS AND--

--AND--

--AND--

OKAY, NOT THE BEST LINE, BUT IT'S ORGANIZED CRIME SPECIFIC AND I'M PRETTY SURE I WOULD HAVE ***NAILED*** THE DELIVERY.

PROBABLY WOULD HAVE REALLY STRESSED "TRUCK".

ANYWAY, THE POINT IS WHEN I'M WITH BLACK CAT I TRY TO SPEND A LITTLE MORE TIME ON MY *"MATERIAL."*

Do.

SHOULD I BE SPENDING THAT TIME ADJUSTING FOR *THE CHAOS* HER *BAD LUCK* POWERS CAUSE?

PROBABLY.

I MEAN, I'M NOT MAD AT HER POWERS FOR KICKING IN... HEY, THAT'S THEIR *RIGHT* IN THIS SITUATION.

HE SAW ME.

THANKS.

BUT SOMETIMES IT'S HARD TO TELL *WHO* THE UNLUCKY ONE IS.

AAAAAAAAAH!

I HEAR YOU, BUDDY.

ONE THING'S FOR SURE, THOUGH...

SHE'S STEPPED ALL OVER MY PUNCH LINE.

SIT.

CRUNCH!

SCORE ANOTHER ROUND FOR J. JONAH JAMESON'S NEW YORK...

WHICH IS GREAT FOR YOU, CAT... *YOUR* SECRET IDENTITY STILL WORKS FOR THE MAYOR'S OFFICE.

YOU TOO.

LOOKS LIKE THESE TWO FELL OFF THE BACK OF A TRUCK...

WHAT?

NOTHING.

...WHAT DO YOU SAY WE CELEBRATE WITH A LITTLE "*PRIVATE TIME?*"

WELL, HAD I BEEN IN THE MOOD, HEARING THE WORDS "*J. JONAH JAMESON*" COME OUT OF YOUR MOUTH WOULD HAVE DEFINITELY KILLED IT...

GURGLE

KAK

WELL, THAT AND THE SOUNDS THIS GUY IS MAKING.

YOU'RE NOT TRYING TO GET RID OF ME, ARE YOU, SPIDER?

NO, SERIOUSLY, THESE GUYS NEED MEDICAL ATTENTION.

+GURGLE+

YOU CAN'T HEAR THAT?

YOU SURE YOU DON'T HAVE A HOT DATE OR SOMETHING?

WHAT?! OF COURSE NOT...

"OF COURSE NOT"?

WELL, I MEAN...I WOULDN'T DO THAT, WHILE YOU AND I ARE...YOU KNOW.

WELL, I'M AN ADULT, SO, YES, I *DO KNOW.* AND WE *BOTH* KNOW THE WORD YOU'RE LOOKING FOR ISN'T *"DATING,"* RIGHT?

YEAH, I KNOW. WE'RE BOTH JUST *"HAVING FUN".*

STILL, IT'S NOT LIKE I'D EVER..."*HAVE FUN*"...WITH ANYONE ELSE WHILE *"HAVING FUN"* WITH YOU.

YOU'RE CUTE, SPIDER, BUT THIS IS BIG BOY TALK. WE'RE *NOT* A COUPLE.

OUCH.

IF SOMETHING BETTER COMES ALONG, DON'T LET *US* GET IN THE WAY.

OUCH.

BELIEVE ME...I DON'T.

AAAAAAAND *OUCH.*

...IT HURTS...

YEP.

"IT'S OKAY TO SMILE, YOU KNOW..."

IT'S ME... IT'S DAD.

STOP!

YOU CAN'T TOUCH THE CHILD, MR. CONNORS.

SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE

I'LL HAVE TO NOTE THAT YOU TRIED.

BILLY, LOOK AT ME. I WOULD *NEVER* HURT YOU...

I'VE GOT A *GOOD JOB* NOW...IN A FEW MONTHS I'LL BE ABLE TO HIRE A LAWYER AND GET YOU BACK, BUT YOU'VE GOT TO TRUST ME.

THE LIZARD IS GONE, BILLY.

ME BEING HERE PROVES THAT--REPTILES DON'T REAR THEIR YOUNG...

WAIT. THAT'S NOT... WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY IS LOSING YOU WOULD KILL ME, BILLY.

SCRIBBLE SCRIBBLE

YOU'RE USING MANIPULATIVE LANGUAGE. THIS VISIT IS OVER.

I-I'M TELLING MY SON WHAT HE MEANS TO ME!

BILLY, IS HE MAKING YOU UNCOMFORTABLE?

YES.

BILLEEE

HEY, AUNT MAY. IT'S ME, PETE. I'M HAVING SOME *GIRL TROUBLE.*

OH, GOD...

YEAH, UH...I'M REALLY HURTING HERE AND YOU SAID I COULD ALWAYS CALL IF---

YEAH. DIDN'T KNOW I WAS SIGNING A BLOODY CONTRACT...

SH-SHOULD I CALL BACK--

JUST GIVE ME A SECOND, I'VE GOT A BUNCH OF MEN HERE TRYING TO PUT A ROOF OVER MY HEAD, BUT LET ME TELL THEM TO STOP WORKING SO WE CAN "GAB."

CHET! LARRY! PUT THE HAMMERS DOWN...MY NEPHEW'S BEEN BADLY HURT!

NO, NOT PHYSICALLY! JUST HIS FEELINGS!

NO, NOT MY "NIECE," MY "NEPHEW."

I-IS THIS A BAD TIME?

LET'S SEE... I'M A NEWLYWED WITH MAYBE FIVE YEARS LEFT ON THIS EARTH WHO'S PRACTICALLY HOMELESS BECAUSE MY HOUSE HAS BEEN *GUTTED BY FLAMES.* BUT ENOUGH ABOUT *ME,* PETER, WHAT'S UP WITH *YOU?*

I'LL CALL BACK...

PROMISE?

BEEP

I KNOW THAT FACE...

SOME GIRL PLAYING WITH YOUR HEART ON THE OTHER LINE?
NO-- I WAS TALKING TO MY *AUNT.*
EH, MY STATEMENT COULD STILL BE ACCURATE.
LISTEN, HARRY, THAT'S A WHOLE OTHER THING--
--WHICH MIGHT INVOLVE HORMONES--
CAN WE CHANGE THE SUBJECT?
SURE THING, BUDDY. *YOU* CALLED ME, WE CAN TALK ABOUT WHATEVER YOU WANT.

UH, I CALLED *MJ* AND *YOU* ANSWERED THE PHONE.
WHICH IS ALWAYS WEIRD.
HEY, ME AND MJ ARE ROOMMATES NOW...WE'RE A TEAM.
TWO PEAS IN A POD.

OH--I MEAN... NOT LIKE *THAT* OF COURSE.
...COME ON.
LET'S CHANGE THE SUBJECT. THIS IS *YOUR* DAY, PARKER... WHAT'S UP?
I'VE BEEN, *"HAVING FUN"* WITH THIS GIRL--
--HER WORDS, NOT MINE--
AND SHE'S TOLD ME IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS THAT IT'S NOT GOING TO GO FARTHER. AND I HONESTLY THINK THE ONLY REASON I HAVEN'T ASKED CARLIE, ON A *"DATE"* DATE IS THIS GIRL, AND--
GO ON...
WAIT, WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH MY PHONE?
YOU MEAN WHAT ARE *YOU* DOING? ASKING CARLIE ON A *"DATE."*
GIVE ME THAT!
IT'S FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU?

PLEASE... I'VE SEEN YOU AROUND CARLIE. JUST LAST WEEK--

--BUT THIS OTHER GIRL--

OH, GROW UP...

YOU'RE NOT A "*JUST HAVING FUN*" GUY, PARKER. YOU BARELY LIKE "*HAVING FUN*" IN GENERAL--MUCH LESS WITH A GIRL.

CARLIE IS PERFECT FOR YOU, AND I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'RE FOOLING AROUND WITH THIS OTHER GIRL BECAUSE YOU DON'T *SEE* THAT...

OR BECAUSE YOU *DO*.

Phelcorp Industries.

I NEVER KNEW *LIZARDS* COULD BE SO *AFFECTIONATE*.

THEY *CAN'T*...

HE'S ATTRACTED TO YOUR BODY HEAT.

I *KNOW*, CURT. BUT LET ME *PRETEND* FOR A FEW MOMENTS. I SPEND ALL DAY WITH THIS LITTLE GUY, IT'S FUN TO THINK THAT HE HAS *SOME* SORT OF ATTACHMENT TO ME...

THE REPTILIAN BRAIN ISN'T CAPABLE OF ATTACHMENT, MARISSA... EVEN WITH FEMALES OF ITS OWN SPECIES.

A REPTILE IS SIMPLY DRIVEN TO MATE WITH WHATEVER FEMALE WANDERS INTO HIS TERRITORY.

SHE MY SWEET WARMTH

THEY BECOME HIS... PROPERTY.

LET COLD ONE MATE KAH NERS

HAVING A NICE CHAT ARE WE?

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?!

EXCUSE ME? I'M IN CHARGE OF THIS FACILITY, DR. CONNORS.

AND UNTIL YOUR RESEARCH CREATES A MARKETABLE PRODUCT, I'D ADVISE YOU TO KEEP THE OFFICE CHITCHAT TO A MINIMUM...

...AND WATCH YOUR TONE.

THIS IS THE LIZARD'S TERRITORY, KING...

GIVE KING RED NECK KAH NERS.

WHAT?

THE... *LIZARDS.* Y-YOU'RE AGITATING THEM.

RIGHT, WELL I WON'T BOTHER YOUR LIZARDS FOR LONG.

I JUST NEED TO STEAL YOUR ASSISTANT FOR A BIT.

OH? WHAT FOR?

JUST SOME PERSONAL MATTERS... IT WON'T TAKE A MOMENT.

YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE, MR. KING.

I'M THE BOSS, CONNORS. I'LL BE WHEREVER I WANT.

WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?

WELL, MARISSA, I WAS WONDERING IF YOU HAD EVER BEEN TO THE OPERA...

"OH, DEAR... OH, DEAR...LOVE IS IN THE AIR..."

INFLAMING THE BEAST THROUGH ONE MAN'S GLARE...

WEBS AND SCALES, A DEADLY GAME

BUT FROM THE CRIES OF THE SON...

...WILL THE BEAST BE TAMED.

MADAME WEB, THAT ENDING WON'T DO AT ALL.

SHALL WE NUDGE THE PLAYERS IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION, ANA?

YES, MOTHER.

Fifth Precinct.

HEY, CARLIE?

GOT TIME FOR LUNCH?

EAT AT JOE'S takeout menu

LADIES! Roller Da... tryout... SUN...

OH MY GOD. DID YOU BRING ME SHAKE SHACK?

YEP.

YOU WAITED IN LINE DURING THE LUNCH RUSH?

I DID.

LOST: ONE MOMENT! --reg Sgt. Q

Officer Bonita's Raiders!

WOW, THAT'S--WAIT, WHAT DO YOU WANT?

NOTHING, I JUST THOUGHT I'D BE NICE AND I HAD A COUPON AND--

PETER.

LOOK, I TOLD YOU WE'D GET LUNCH TOGETHER, AND I LEFT YOU HANGING, RIGHT?

SO I BROUGHT YOU LUNCH.

WE CAN EAT IT TOGETHER.

I MEAN, I OWE YOU LUNCH, OKAY? I TOLD YOU I'D TAKE YOU TO LUNCH THEN I RAN OUT ON YOU SO I OWE YOU LUNCH... AND I HAD THAT COUPON AND--

LISTEN, IT CAN JUST BE LUNCH.

HMPH.

I'M GOING TO EAT IT.

BUT IT'S JUST *LUNCH*. THIS ISN'T A "*DATE*" OR ANYTHING, ALL RIGHT?

OF COURSE.

IT'S JUST TWO FRIENDS ENJOYING A MEAL.

I'M PROBABLY GOING TO TELL EVERYONE THAT THIS WAS A DATE.

FINE.

Phelcorp Industries.
7:51 A.M.

GOOD MORNING, MARISSA. YOU'RE HERE EARLY--

OH...I SLEPT IN THE CITY LAST NIGHT.

REALLY? WHAT DID YOU GET UP T--

LOST SHE KAHNARRS

SNFF SNFF

DR. CONNORS?

SHE MAKE KING SMELL

GRRR...

MARISSA. SLEEPING WITH BRIAN KING WAS A VERY, VERY *BAD* IDEA...

DR. CONNORS THAT'S NOT AN APPROPRIATE SUBJ--

KING CHALLENGE KAHN RRS

DR. CONNORS?!

GRRRRRRR! GET OUT OF MY WAY!!

LET COLD ONE SEE SUN KAHN RRS

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO BE CHILDISH ABOUT THIS, ARE YOU, CONNORS?

CERTAINLY SOMEONE WITH YOUR...*HISTORY*... CAN CONTROL THEIR EMOTIONS.

LET COLD ONE GIVE KING RED SLEEP KAHN RRS

KING!

THIS IS MY TERRITOR--

--OFFICE--

YOU'RE IN MY OFFICE.

MAKE KING NECK SMILE RED KAHN RRS

WHAT DO YOU HAVE OVER THERE, DR. CONNORS?

DO YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU'RE DOING?!

POACHED MY FEMALE...ONLY RESPONSE IS A SHOW OF FORCE.

THE R-COMPLEX BECOMES INFLAMED...

INSTINCT CALLS FOR ACTION...

ARE YOU HIDING SOMETHING FROM ME? YOU DON'T WANT TO DO THAT.

YOU HAVE NO *IDEA* WHAT I WANT TO DO...

BITE KING HAND CHEW KING EYES

ARE YOU THREATENING--

LOOK AT ME, CONNORS!

LET COLD ONE OUT KAHN RRS

GYAARRRRRRRGH!!

YESSSS MAKE KING SEE STRENGTH

YOU IDIOT! I'LL KILL YOU!

LET COLD ONE SEE SUN

HE'LL KILL YOU...

GIVE COLD ONE KAHN RRS WARMTH

LIZARD SERUM, CONNORS?!

YOU THINK I'D STAND BY AND LET YOU TURN YOURSELF INTO A *MONSTER*?!

YOU IDIOT...

IT DOESN'T LET THE LIZARD OUT...

IT KEEPS HIM IN!

CONNORS...

NO!

DEAD

PART ONE

TO BE CONTINUED...

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #631

South Bronx.

MY NAME IS KAINE. I NEVER RUN FROM ANYTHING.

I CAN SEE GLIMPSES OF THE FUTURE...A GIFT OF THE MAN I WAS CLONED FROM.

I HAVE THOUGHT MANY TIMES OF THE DAY THIS GIFT WOULD SHOW ME MY DEATH AND HOW I WOULD ACCEPT IT GLADLY

BUT THIS GIRL...

...STANDING IN THE PLACE I CALLED MY *HOME* ATOP THE MURDERED BODIES OF MY FELLOW TRANSIENTS...

I HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU...

I GOT *BORED.*

...SHE BRINGS WITH HER A FUTURE-FLASH OF DEATH PERVERTED DARK CEREMONIES STINKING OF MILK AND EXCREMENT

MY NAME IS KAINE. I NEVER RUN FROM ANYTHING.

TONIGHT I MAKE AN EXCEPTION

NYET!

PFFFT

MY NAME IS KAINE I

I

NYAAAH...

I AM HUNTED

AAAAAAH...

SHHHH. IT DOESN'T HURT THAT BAD.

SEE?

SSSSSSSSSSSSSSSS

STAYAWAYFROMME...

STAY AWAY FROM ME!

"ACID TOUCH?"

I WILL REMEMBER.

YOU HAVE HAD ENOUGH FUN, ANA.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, ALY?! HE'S MINE TO PLAY WITH! MOTHER TOLD ME--

MOTHER WILL NOT ALLOW THE HUNT UNTIL THE GAUNTLET IS COMPLETE.

THE LIZARD HAS HATCHED...

HE WILL NEED TO BE FED.

Blue Hills Restaurant.
GREENWICH VILLAGE

SO THIS IS WHAT THIS FEELS LIKE...

CARLIE SAID SHE'D BE HERE AT EIGHT.

I WAS HERE AT EIGHT.

I MADE THE RESERVATION FOR EIGHT. BUT ACCORDING TO THE MAITRE D'...

SIR, EIGHT WAS A VERY LONG TIME AGO.

HEH. I GOTCHA. SORRY, FOLKS.

OUCH. AND HOW MANY PEOPLE HAVE I STOOD UP IN MY DAY? I HAVEN'T BEEN FEELING NEARLY AS GUILTY AS I SHOULD BE.

THEN AGAIN, I USUALLY HAVE AN EXCUSE. I'VE GOT A NAGGING SUSPICION CARLIE'S JUST GETTING BACK AT ME FOR ALL THE TIMES I BLEW HER OFF.

BZZZ

Phelcorp Industries.

GILMORE NEEDS YOU IN CONNORS' OFFICE, CARLIE.

IT'S THE SMALL ROOM IN THE CORNER.

THANKS, DETECTIVE.

SHED PART TWO

THE DEATH OF CURT CONNORS

WHAT'S UP, GILMORE.

FOUND CONNORS' I.D.

THIS MESS IS HIM, THEN?

MAYBE *SOME* OF IT. THIS IS THE SECOND I.D. I PULLED...FIRST ONE BELONGED TO "BRIAN KING."

GONNA BE HERE ALL NIGHT, SORTING OUT WHO IS WHO.

I CAN TAKE A HINT. GO ASSIST GOLDSTEIN. I CAN HANDLE THIS.

THANKS, CARLIE.

DON'T MENTION IT.

CONNORS.

HE DID THIS, DIDN'T HE?

WE DON'T KNOW WHO DID IT.

HOW... HOW MANY?

AT LEAST *SIX*. NO ONE IN THE LAB SURVIVED EXCEPT CONNORS' ASSISTANT.

HAVE YOU TALKED TO HER? DID SHE SEE WHAT HAPPENED?

SHE'S IN NO SHAPE TO TALK.

...

LEAVE IT AT THAT.

I BELIEVED HIM. HE SAID HE WAS CURED AND I BELIEVED HIM... *AGAIN*.

SPIDER-MAN, CURT...CURT CONNORS COULDN'T HAVE DONE *THIS*, COULD HE?

NO. WHICH MEANS HE'S *THE LIZARD*.

I...I JUST TALKED TO HIM. A WEEK AGO. HE WAS TRYING TO GET CUSTODY OF HIS KID. THAT'S ALL HE COULD TALK ABOUT...

BILLY? OH, GOD--

CARLIE, BILLY CONNORS IS *NOT* SAFE. THE LIZARD IS OBSESSED WITH HIM.

HE'S IN FOSTER CARE.

I NEED AN ADDRESS.

I'LL HAVE TO MAKE A CALL.

MAKE IT.

NOW.

Greenwood Heights, Brooklyn.

15 MINUTES LATER.

NO.

HERE BIL EEE NEST?

NO NO NO...

WEAK VOICE KAH NRRS

PLEASE...

NOT THIS...

COLD ONE MAKE STRONG VOICE

SMALL ONES HEAR VOICE BEHIND EYES

OH, GOD...THAT SMELL.

I KNOW THAT SMELL. OH...

WE TAKE NEST KAH NRRS

OH, THANK YOU.

HELLO, CURT.

I KNOW YOU. I KNOW YOU'LL PROTECT MY SON.

GRRRRRRRRR

HE KNOWS IT TOO.

I'M TALKING TO *YOU*, CURT. CAN YOU HEAR ME?

YES...

I NEED YOU TO FIGHT HIM. HE'S ALREADY KILLED SIX PEOPLE.

OH, GOD... I'M SO SORRY.

I'M NOT GOING TO LET HIM GET TO YOUR SON, BUT I NEED YOUR HELP. I KNOW YOU CAN FIGHT HIM.

I KNOW. PLEASE, KEEP TALKING. I KNOW...

YOU'RE A MAN, CURT. YOU'RE CURT CONNORS.

I'M A MAN.

KAH NRRS MAKE QUIET!

I'M A MAN. MY NAME IS CURT--

QUIET MAMMAL BRAIN!

KRNCH!

KRNCH!

KAH NRRS HIDE IN MAMMAL BRAIN

CONN--

GRRAAAARRRRRR!!

KAH NRRS TAKE SLEEP NOW

THOUGHT TALKING TO HIM WAS GOING TO WORK FOR A SECOND...

I KNOW, I KNOW...I'M PRETTY DENSE FOR A COLLEGE GRADUATE.

LNGH!!

BUT LET'S NOT KID OURSELVES...

THUMP!

I'VE SUFFERED A FEW BLOWS TO THE HEAD.

KNNNCH

SWOOSH

HOPEFULLY ONE MORE WON'T HURT.

KFSHH

SMALL ONES.

LISTEN BEHIND LITTLE EYES.

SUBMIT BECOME MASTER WILL

SUBMIT BECOME MASTER WILL

SUBMIT BECOME MASTER WILL

SUBMIT BECOME MASTER WILL

SUBMIT BECOME MASTER WILL

TOO MANY OF THEM. STOP THINKING, PETER.

LISTEN TO YOUR SPIDER-SENSE.

SURVIVE.

BREAK MAMMAL MAKE STILL

DON'T THINK FIND EYES

MAKE BLIND GET TO FRONT

HIDE EYES IN DARKNESS SKIN

STAND FAST BETWEEN BILLY

SPLAT

STAY IN FRONT OF...

BILLY?

OH, NO... HE'S ALREADY BEEN HERE.

H-HELP...

WAIT!

THESE... THESE PEOPLE NEED HELP...

PLEASE...

...

HRMMPH!

THAT SMELL...

BIL LEEE

NO...

HE'S...HE'S LEAVING. DID HE UNDERSTAND ME?

I CAN'T LET HIM GET FAR...

FWIP

BUT THESE POOR PEOPLE...

GOT 'IM. I'LL TRACE HIM AS SOON AS I CHECK FOR SURVIVORS.

NO. PLEASE...

YOU CAN'T LET ME LEAVE.

PLEASE.

I KNOW WHAT HE WANTS TO DO.

BAM!

BILLY?!

-GURGLE-

NO...

I THOUGHT I'D GOTTEN HERE IN TIME...

MA'AM, HANG ON. I'M GOING TO CALL FOR HELP.

+COUGH+

CAN YOU TALK? IS BILLY CONNORS IN THE HOUSE?

SHE TOOK HIM.

...SHE WAS J-JUST A LITTLE GIRL.

SHE?!

JUST A LITTLE GIRL...

HNNNN. HNNNNNN.

STOP YOUR CRYING.

YOU SHOULD BE THANKING ME.

I DIDN'T *HAVE* TO LET YOU WATCH.

HISSSS

IT'S BETTER THIS WAY. YOU SHOULD BE WITH YOUR FATHER.

FAMILY IS YOUR LEGACY.

SSSSSSSSSSSSSSSSS

DAD?

PUH- PLEASE DON'T, DADDY...

KAH NRRS WANT KILL COLD ONE

OH, GOD...

DON'T DO THIS.

NO NO NO.

SSSS

NO...

KAH NRRS BE RIVAL MALE

HURF!

NO!

COLD ONE RAID KAH NRRS NEST!

AAGH!!

I'LL DIE BEFORE I LET YOU DO IT!

HNNN... HNNN... HNNN...

COLD ONE EAT KAH NRRS YOUNG!

YA... YOU'RE GOING TO KILL ME, AREN'T YOU?

GUH... GUH...

I KNEW IT...

STOP! STOP!

NO KAH NRRS

COLD ONE STRONGEST MALE!

I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN IT.

STO--!

NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO NO

NO NO NO NO NO NO

NO NO NO

"IT IS AS THE SEER FORESAW.

NO NO NO NO

NO NO NO NO

NO NO NO

NO NO NO NO

NO NO NO

"CURT CONNORS IS DEAD."

NO NO NO NO

THE LIZARD IS MADE WHOLE, ANA. WE MUST GO.

HE'S NOT FINISHED. JUST A FEW MORE MOMENTS.

THE SPIDER WILL BE HERE SOON. WE ARE NOT TO MEDDLE IN THIS FURTHER.

I DID GOOD, DIDN'T I, ALY?

JUST A FEW MORE MOMENTS...

+SIGH+

...A FEW MORE MOMENTS...

TO BE CONTINUED...

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #632

THERE'S NOTHING I COULD HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY.

BILLY'S FOSTER MOM WAS BLEEDING OUT. IF I'D LEFT HER SHE WOULD HAVE DIED.

I DIDN'T STOP TO TALK TO THE E.M.T.S.

CRASH!

I TOLD NO JOKES.

GOT BACK TO THE CITY IN RECORD TIME...PICKED UP MY TRACER'S SIGNAL ALMOST INSTANTLY.

MY ARMS ARE STILL BURNING. I COULDN'T HAVE MOVED ANY FASTER.

BUT NONE OF IT MATTERS.

BILLY CONNORS IS DEAD.

SNAP OUT OF IT, PARKER--

THE *SPIDER-TRACER.* IT'S STILL CLOSE...

THE LIZARD'S STILL HERE.

HIDING IN THIS GARBAGE...

CONNORS!

BILLY'S DEAD!

YOU KILLED YOUR--

--SON.

OH, GOD...

THE LIZARD... CONNORS.

CURT...

I FAILED YOU, TOO.

DEAD. HE'S DEAD.

SCRRCH

WHA--

SPLORCH

NO...

HE'S NOT DEAD. SOMETHING'S CLAWING ITS WAY OUT OF THE SKIN...

RT-T-T-T-T-T-T-T-T

IS IT...

CONNORS?

KAH NRRS?

KAHN RRS... IS SHED.

IT...IT'S *THE LIZARD* BUT...

CURT, LISTEN TO ME...

MONKEY BRAIN IS LIZARD HOME NOW. NO MORE KAH NRRS...

KAHNARS...

CAHNNURS...

CONNORS.

YOU...YOU'RE TALKING...

CONNORS' BRAIN HAD MANY WORDS.

I HAVE MANY WORDS NOW.

WHAT... WHAT DID YOU DO...

WHEN LIZARD COMES ALWAYS CONNORS HOLD ON TO MONKEY BRAIN.

HOLD ON TO PROTECT OFFSPRING.

LIZARD RAID HIS NEST.

CONNORS NOT WANT TO HOLD ON ANY MORE.

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE...

...WHAT YOU DID.

CONNORS HAVE PICTURE OF YOU IN BRAIN.

WHEN LIZARD WAS DUMB, LIZARD WAS YOUR PREY.

LIZARD TAKE MONKEY BRAIN.

LIZARD NO LONGER DUMB.

YOU ARE PREY.

YOU'RE NOT AS SMART AS YOU THINK YOU ARE.

THOK!

HNNN...

YEEARRRGHH!

RT-T-T-T-T-T

CRASH!

WHY MONKEY BRAIN TELL YOU TO FIGHT?!

I KNOW LIZARD BRAIN TELLS YOU TO RUN.

THAT YOU ARE PREY!

SMASH

ARRGHHH!

WHY YOU LISTEN TO DUMB MAMMAL BRAIN?

BECAUSE I'M NOT A LIZARD.

DUH.

YOU ARE WRONG!

YOU MAMMALS JUST LIZARD IN MONKEY SUIT.

CONNORS HAVE THIS PICTURE IN HIS BRAIN.

NOW I HAVE THIS PICTURE IN MY BRAIN.

M-MY HEAD... WHAT'S HE DOING...

MONKEY BRAINS HOLD A LIZARD INSIDE.

TRAPPED, LIKE I WAS TRAPPED.

--URK!

CAN'T MOVE...

DUMB LIZARD ONLY TALK TO LITTLE LIZARDS.

AM SMART LIZARD.

I TALK TO LIZARD INSIDE YOU.

I MAKE LIZARD WAKE UP.

N-NO...I FEEL HIM...

I FEEL HIM IN MY BRAIN...

THINK, PETER...

NO

NO THINK

NO
THINK ONLY
LOOK

LOOK
CLAWS.

LOOK
TEETH.

LOOK
BLOOD.

I IS PREY.

NO THINK!

RUN!

RUN!

YES. YOU RUN NOW.

NOW YOU KNOW! YOU ARE PREY.

NOW YOU--

WHY MONKEY BRAIN TELL LIZARD TO STOP?

MONKEY BRAIN SAY I NEED MORE SKIN?

WHAT IS MEAN...

I... NAKED?

Phelcorp Industries.
OFFICE OF DOCTOR CURT CONNORS.
CRASH!
CARLIE...
IS...IS IT SAFE?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
AM I SAFE HERE?!
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
THE *LIZARD*... HE'S BACK.
AND... AND...HE'S GOT REALLY BIG TEETH...
I...I'M SORRY. HE DID SOMETHING TO MY BRAIN.
CARLIE, I NEED YOU TO CALL-- I DON'T--
WHO DO YOU CALL WHEN THERE'S A DEAD BODY?

OH, GOD... BILLY?

YES.

AND CURT, HE'S THE ONE WHO--

YES.

OH, GOD...

HE WAS THE LIZARD, BUT HE WAS DIFFERENT... *SMARTER.*

I NEED TO KNOW WHAT HE WAS WORKING ON HERE.

ACCORDING TO PHELCORP IT WAS SOME SORT OF NEURAL STIMULANT TO INCREASE LIBIDO.

BUT ACCORDING TO HIS JOURNALS HE WAS ALSO DEVELOPING A SERIES OF NEURAL INHIBITORS TARGETING THE R-COMPLEX.

HE WAS TRYING TO CORRECT AN IMBALANCE IN HIS OWN BRAIN.

SEE HOW HIS *R-COMPLEX* IS SWOLLEN? IT'S PUTTING PRESSURE ON THE *NEO-CORTEX.*

...THE MONKEY BRAIN.

CONNORS WAS CONVINCED THE LIZARD *"LIVED"* INSIDE HIS PRIMITIVE BRAIN STRUCTURES...THAT IT WAS TRYING TO *"INVADE"* HIS HIGHER, MAMMALIAN FUNCTIONS.

HE THOUGHT THE LIZARD WAS TRYING TO KILL HIM.

HE SHOULD HAVE COME TO ME FOR HELP!

HE WAS TRYING TO GET CUSTODY OF HIS SON...HE HAD TO DISGUISE ANY CHANCE HE COULD RELAPSE.

HE WAS USING *THESE* TO KEEP THE LIZARD SEDATED.

HIS ANTIDOTE. I'LL NEED ALL OF IT.

AND I...AND I...

CAN I HAVE THIS PICTURE OF BILLY?

ARE YOU SERIOUS?

YES.

NO MORE JOKES.

WOW... HE'S CUTE. WHAT IS HE?

IT'S A *SHE*.

OOPS.

HA! EASY MISTAKE.

STARVING... WHAT THE #@$% IS TAKING SO LONG.

Eli's Cajun HOT-HOLE

SORRY, BOSS. I'M OFF DUTY.

I NEED A CAB. IT'S IMPORTANT...

8:00 on ABC

MONKEY BRAIN GROWS QUIET NOW.

I AM NO LONGER NAKED.

OTHER COLD BLOODS GATHER. I MAKE PICTURES IN THEIR BRAINS.

...I AM THEIR BROTHER.

BUT I FEEL OTHER COLD BLOODS NOW.

I TALK TO THEM.

PUT PICTURES IN THEIR BRAINS.

THEY ARE TRAPPED IN THE BRAINS OF THE MAMMALS.

WAKE UP.

ARE YOU OKAY?

AIEEE!

WANT. MINE.

S-STOP IT...

YOU ARE LIZARDS IN MONKEY SKINS.

FOOD! MINE! MINE!

NO MORE HIDING.

I AM STRONGER!!

GIVE ME THE CAB!!

PUSH THROUGH MONKEY SKIN.

SHED.

TO BE CONTINUED...

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #633

...WE DON'T KNOW WHAT STARTED THE RIOT AT THIS POINT.

THE VIOLENT OUTBURSTS CAME TO OUR ATTENTION WHILE COVERING THE MANHUNT FOR CURT CONNORS, WANTED IN CONNECTION WITH MULTIPLE HOMICIDES COMMITTED AT PHELCORP INDUSTRIES EARLY LAST NIGHT.

AROUND SIX O'CLOCK THIS MORNING WE OBSERVED CITIZENS OF ALL RACES AND CREEDS SHOWING AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR. EVEN POLICE OFFICERS SEEMED TO BE--

SHEILA...

DAMMIT, FRANK. WHAT ARE YOU--

YOU'RE TOO CLOSE, BOSS. BACK UP.

I WILL SUBDUE YOU AND MATE WITH YOUR WOMAN.

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING--

YEEEARRGGH!!

FRANK!

FRANK...

DO IT.

THUNK

I...I KILLED HIM...

YOU ARE STRONGER.

I AM YOURS.

HURF!

LIZARD TALKS TO BROTHERS IN MONKEY SUITS.

TELL THEM THEY ARE FREE. TELL THEM TO SHED MONKEY BRAIN.

THEY ARE LIZARDS.

COLD AND STRONG.

HURF!

SORRY, LITTLE GUY.

HURF?

HURF!

THIS IS MY CITY. AND I'M HERE TO TAKE IT BACK.

HOW AM I GOING TO DO THAT, YOU ASK, WITH YOUR BIG FRIEND TURNING ANYTHING WITH A BRAIN STEM INTO A MANIAC?

THIS ANSWER YOUR QUESTION, GODZILLA?

HRRRR

THAT'S RIGHT. YOU KNOW.

HARF!

CONNORS WAS USING THIS STUFF TO KEEP HIS REPTILIAN BRAIN LOCKED UP.

IF IT WORKS ON HIM, IT HAS TO WORK ON *ME*, RIGHT?

PUNT

JUST SAY, "RIGHT."

HARF!

HRRRM...

HARF!

HARF!

WHAT IS IT, LITTLE BROTHER?

ARGGHH!

THUD.

HARF!

I FEEL YOUR MONKEY BRAIN. STRONG AND BRIGHT.

YOU HAVE TAKEN CONNORS' POISON.

YOU CHAIN YOUR INSIDE REPTILE.

HE IS THE ONLY THING THAT COULD HAVE SAVED YOU!

LIZARD BRAIN IS ACTION AND MOVEMENT. MONKEY BRAIN IS ONLY WORDS.

SEE IF YOU CAN MAKE WORDS TO SAVE YOU.

YOU HAVE NO WORDS?

YOU THINK NOW BAD IDEA TO DRINK CONNORS POISON?

GAK!

I DIDN'T DRINK *ALL* OF IT.

UARRGH!!

ARGGGHHH!

CONNORS!

FIGHT HIM, CONNORS!

ARGGH!

FIGHT HIM!

HA.

HA HA.

"FIGHT HIM, CONNORS!"

HA HA HA.

CONNORS IS DEAD!

NO NO NO.

Th-that's not true... You are Curt Connors...

You're Billy's father!

WHAT IS A BILLY?

YOU PUT PICTURES IN MY HEAD?

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

YOU PUT PICTURES IN MY HEAD!!!

WAIT!

TOO MANY OF THEM. CAN'T GET FREE WITHOUT CUTTING LOOSE...

HUNDREDS OF THEM!

NO! DON'T LASH OUT, PETER. THINK. THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING.

LIKE DUMB ANIMALS... *INNOCENT.*

RRRIP

THEY'RE TEARING ME APART!

DON'T YOU HURT THEM, PETER. NO MATTER WHAT.

THEY'RE NEW YORKERS. YOUR JOB IS TO HELP THEM.

YOU'LL DIE PROTECTING THEM!

I KNOW...

I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN IT.

CRUSH BODIES. BREAK NECKS. LIVE!

THESE PEOPLE ARE INNOCENT, PETER. STAY CALM. THINK.

LET IT GO. GO LIMP.

NO NO NO...

DONT YOU EVER HURT THEM...

NO NO NO...

EVEN IF IT MEANS...

...

...

I HAVE PICTURES IN MY HEAD.

HNNN...

LITTLE ONE'S BLOOD.

LITTLE ONE'S SCREAMS.

B-BILLY...

LITTLE ONE BEGGED.

D-DAD?

I ATE THE OFFSPRING OF A RIVAL MALE.

THIS WAS A GOOD THING, YES?! A GOOD STRONG THING?!

YES?!

YOU KNOW WHAT IT WAS...DON'T YOU...

WAS A GOOD, STRONG THING.

WHY THE PICTURES MAKE ME FEEL WEAK?

MAKE ME INJURED...

WHY THE PICTURES HOLD BACK MY CLAWS...

WHY THEY TELL ME TO HIDE MY FACE?

IS THIS...

IS THIS WHAT IT IS, TO BE A MAMMAL?

YOU...YOU MAMMALS...

YOU MADE ALL THIS, DIDN'T YOU?

ALL OF THIS...

IT'S CALLED SHAME...

Y-YOU KILLED A LITTLE BOY...

...GET USED TO IT...

HEH. =CAFF!=

...NOT ALL IT'S CRACKED UP TO BE, IS IT?

THAT... THAT IS NOT A BIRD.

I COULD NOT SEE THIS, BEFORE I TOOK CONNORS'... BRAIN...

ONLY KNEW WHAT WAS DANGER...OR WHAT WAS PREY. ONLY KNEW TO RUN OR TO BITE.

BUT THERE IS MORE, YES?

Y-YES...

MUCH, MUCH MORE.

I DO NOT BELONG HERE.

N-NO...

BLOOD RUSHING TO MY HEAD. CONNORS SERUM...DON'T PASS OUT PARKER! DON'T--

WEB-SHOOTERS DESTROYED... I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE.

BUT THEY'RE ALIVE. HE LET THEM ALL GO.

HE LET *ME* GO.

WHY?

HNNNN...

BODY'S NOT WORKING...

Forest Hills, Queens.

...OPERATING UNDER THE THEORY THAT THE MOB WAS UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF "CURT CONNORS," AKA THE LIZARD, AS THEY DISPERSED SHORTLY--

DING DONG

NEW YORK CITY...HOW CAN THEY EVEN TELL THE DIFFERENCE?!

WHAT IS IT?!

MAY, CAN I...

CAN I TALK TO YOU?

OH, PETER...

YOU... YOU SHOULD HAVE CALLED FIRST!

I HAVE A LIFE TOO, YOU KNOW!

MAY... I...I KNOW THAT I'VE BEEN ANNOYING YOU LATELY, AND I'M SORRY...

I JUST...

I *NEED* YOU, AUNT MAY.

I...I KNOW... I...

I KNOW WHY YOU'RE HERE! YOU WANT SOMETHING, DON'T YOU?!

WHAT IS IT? MONEY?!

PLEASE, STOP YELLING...

I NEED TO KNOW WE DON'T ALL WANT TO HURT EACH OTHER...

THAT CAN'T BE WHAT'S INSIDE EVERYONE.

CONNORS, HE...

HIS *SON*, BILLY--

HE...

OH, GOD...

OH, PETER...

I-I WANT YOU TO LEAVE!

I...

PETER...

MY SWEET PETER, I'VE GOT TO--

NO! HE'S MANIPULATING YOU! HE'S--

MAY. WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

PETER... IT'S OKAY.

IT'S ME... YOUR AUNT MAY'S BACK.

MAKE SOME ROOM, DEAR.

IT'S OKAY, NOW.

EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE OKAY.

Manhattan.

I TELL THE MAMMALS INSIDE LIZARDS TO GO BACK TO SLEEP.

THE FREEDOM I KNOW MAKES SCARED FEELINGS. MAYBE IT IS NOT SO GOOD.

MOST ARE HAPPY TO WRAP THEMSELVES IN THEIR WARM-BLOODED SKINS, HIBERNATING IN THE DARK WARMTH.

BUT NOT ALL.

SOME DO NOT GIVE UP THEIR FREEDOM SO EASILY.

SOME HAVE GROWN A TASTE FOR IT.

THEY ARE CURIOUS CREATURES, THESE LIZARDS IN MONKEY SUITS.

THEY SHOULD MAKE GOOD PETS.

The End.

WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #7
“GAUNTLET ORIGINS: KRAVEN”

Roskolov Estate, Outside Paris. Decades Ago.

I DIDN'T SLEEP A *WINK*, KRAVINOFF--AND I HAVE *YOU* TO BLAME!*

I STAYED UP *ALL NIGHT* READING YOUR ACCOUNT OF STALKING *YETI* IN NEPAL--HOW *DID* YOU KEEP THE BEASTS FROM GETTING THE BEST OF YOU?

LE MONDE SAID YOU'VE JUST RETURNED FROM YOUR LATEST SAFARI--IN *ANTARCTICA!*

WHAT THE DEVIL DID YOU HUNT THERE, SERGEI-- *PENGUINS?*

PLEASE, PLEASE, FRIENDS-- I WILL REGALE YOU WITH *ALL* MY SECRETS, BUT ONE AT A TIME!

REGARDING THE *ABOMINABLE,* DESPITE THEIR STRENGTH, I OBSERVED THEIR EYESIGHT WAS QUITE *POOR*--THEY DEPEND ALMOST ENTIRELY ON THEIR ACUTE SENSE OF *SMELL!*

SO I CROUCHED, HIDDEN IN A DESOLATE HIMALAYAN CRAG *UPWIND* OF THEIR TRAILS AND *WAITED*...FOR *DAYS*...MY HONED JUNGLE REFLEXES *POISED* TO STRIKE...

SSPLLSSSHH

?!

*ALL DIALOGUE IN THIS STORY HELPFULLY TRANSLATED FROM THE RUSSIAN--BRENNANOVICH

"JUNGLE REFLEXES?" HA! THEY DON'T SEEM MUCH TO ME!

BUT THEN YOU'RE NOT HOUNDING *ENDANGERED SPECIES* WITH A *HIGH-POWERED RIFLE* HERE, ARE YOU?

UM...

PERHAPS I'VE HAD TOO MUCH TO DRINK...

AH! TIME FOR A NEW HUNT, MY FRIENDS!

HA...

OOOFF!

YOUR PERFUME-- *L'AIMANT DE COTY.* EXQUISITE.

I COULD TRACK YOU BLINDFOLDED THROUGH A FISH MARKET.

LET-- GO--

YOU ARE *ALEKSANDRA NIKOLAEVNA,* YES?

YOUR FATHER WAS ONCE GRAND DUKE.

AH. MY LADY.

WE WERE ALL A *LOT* OF THINGS *ONCE.* BEFORE THE BOLSHEVIKS.

EVEN YOU, I SUPPOSE.

YOU FIND SO MANY DIFFERENT WAYS TO *MISJUDGE* ME.

FOR YOU THINK ME A SAVAGE...

...BUT I HAVE *SEEN* SAVAGERY. I HAVE SEEN IT'S HOME.

"IF I COULD MEET LENIN OR STALIN...

"...I WOULD FALL ON MY KNEES BEFORE THEM...

"WE 'WHITE' RUSSIANS...CAST OUT OF *CIVILIZATION* BY *FANATICS.*

"...AND *KISS THEIR FEET* IN THANKSGIVING."

"ON MY RECENT TRIP TO ANTARCTICA THIS WAS MADE EVEN CLEARER TO ME.

"WE ARE NOT MISSING A THING.

"I DO NOT HUNT WITH A HIGH-POWERED RIFLE, ALEKSANDRA.

"BUT WITH WEAPONS OF STONE AND WOOD I HAVE FORGED WITH MY OWN TWO HANDS...

"...POWERED BY MY OWN MUSCLE AND SINEW...

"...WHICH I WOULD PIT AGAINST ANY BEAST'S."

"OR MAN'S.

"IN THE WILD I HAVE FOUND A PURER EXISTENCE THAN MOSCOW OR PETERSBURG COULD OFFER.

"AS COULD WE ALL.

"WE '*WHITES*' SHOULD STOP GRIEVING OVER THE DUSTY RELICS OF A PAST LONG DEAD...

"...AND *SEIZE* THE *GIFT* THAT HAS BEEN GIVEN US."

"YOU SEE, ALEKSANDRA, IN THE MIDST OF PURSUIT... OR A KILL...

"...I DO NOT EXIST.

"ALL THE PETTY PAIN OF LIVING FALLS AWAY...

"...ALL UNREALIZED DESIRES...

"...UNTIL ONLY *THE HUNT* IS LEFT."

AND... WHAT PAIN...

...MUST YOU... *DROWN* IN SUCH A WAY...?

MONSIEUR KRAVINOFF!

YOUR *MOTHER*--

OH, NO.

WHAT HAS SHE DONE *NOW?*

SERGE!! GET HER OUT OF HERE!!

SHE *SLAPPED* ME WHEN I TRIED TO RESTRAIN HER FROM TAKING HER CLOTHES OFF AND JUMPING INTO THE *FOUNTAIN*--

CALL THE POLICE! NOW, SERGE!

OUR FAMILY HAS SERVED THE CZAR FOR SIX GENERATIONS! I GO WHERE I WANT TO, *WHEN* I WANT TO!

I AM A KRAVINOFF, GODDAMN IT! THAT MEANS SOMETHING!

FOR MONTHS, SHE'S FINE. THEN...OUT OF NOWHERE...

THEY SAY...

THEY SAY MY MOTHER IS INSANE.

LET GO! YOUR *BLOOD'S* NOT FIT TO SHINE MY HUSBAND'S *BOOTS*--

DO YOU NEED ANY HELP BRINGING HER HOME? OR...

...I DON'T KNOW, JUST TO FINISH OUR TALK...

YES... PERHAPS WE CAN MEET AGAIN AT MY HOTEL, ONCE I HAVE HER SETTLED...

THANK YOU, ALEKSANDRA.

"SERGEI. PLEASE...

"...TO YOU I CAN BE *SASHA.*"

The Next Morning:

ASCENSEUR HORS SERVICE

SO...?

SO...

...YOU WERE RIGHT.

"REVERSE PSYCHOLOGY" WORKED, JUST AS YOU THOUGHT--FEIGNING A MORAL OBJECTION TO HIS HUNTING--

OBFUSCATING THE FACT THAT HE WAS THE ONE BEING STALKED.

I HAVE NO DOUBT HE OPENED UP TO YOU LIKE A FLOWER.

TCH. DON'T BE VULGAR, PAPA.

SHALL WE TAKE YOUR MORNING CONSTITUTIONAL AN HOUR OR TWO LATE TODAY?

YES, YES. THAT WOULD BE LOVELY.

OH, SASHA, SASHA, MY DARLING GIRL...

...WORDS CANNOT EXPRESS HOW PROUD I AM OF YOU.

ALL THE LESSER MEN I ASKED YOU TO "*BEFRIEND.*" YOU WILL SEE NOW HOW IT WAS ALL WORTH IT.

THE SKILLS YOU ACQUIRED BAGGED YOU A KRAVINOFF!

ONE OF THE ONLY "WHITE" FAMILIES WITH ANY FORTUNE LEFT TO SPEAK OF--THANKS TO THE SON'S EXPLOITS!

MY DEAR, YOU HAVE DONE NOTHING MORE OR LESS THAN SECURED THE FUTURE OF THE NIKOLAEVICHES--

SASHA, WHAT ARE YOU--

AAAAAAAHHHH!!

SORRY, PAPA.

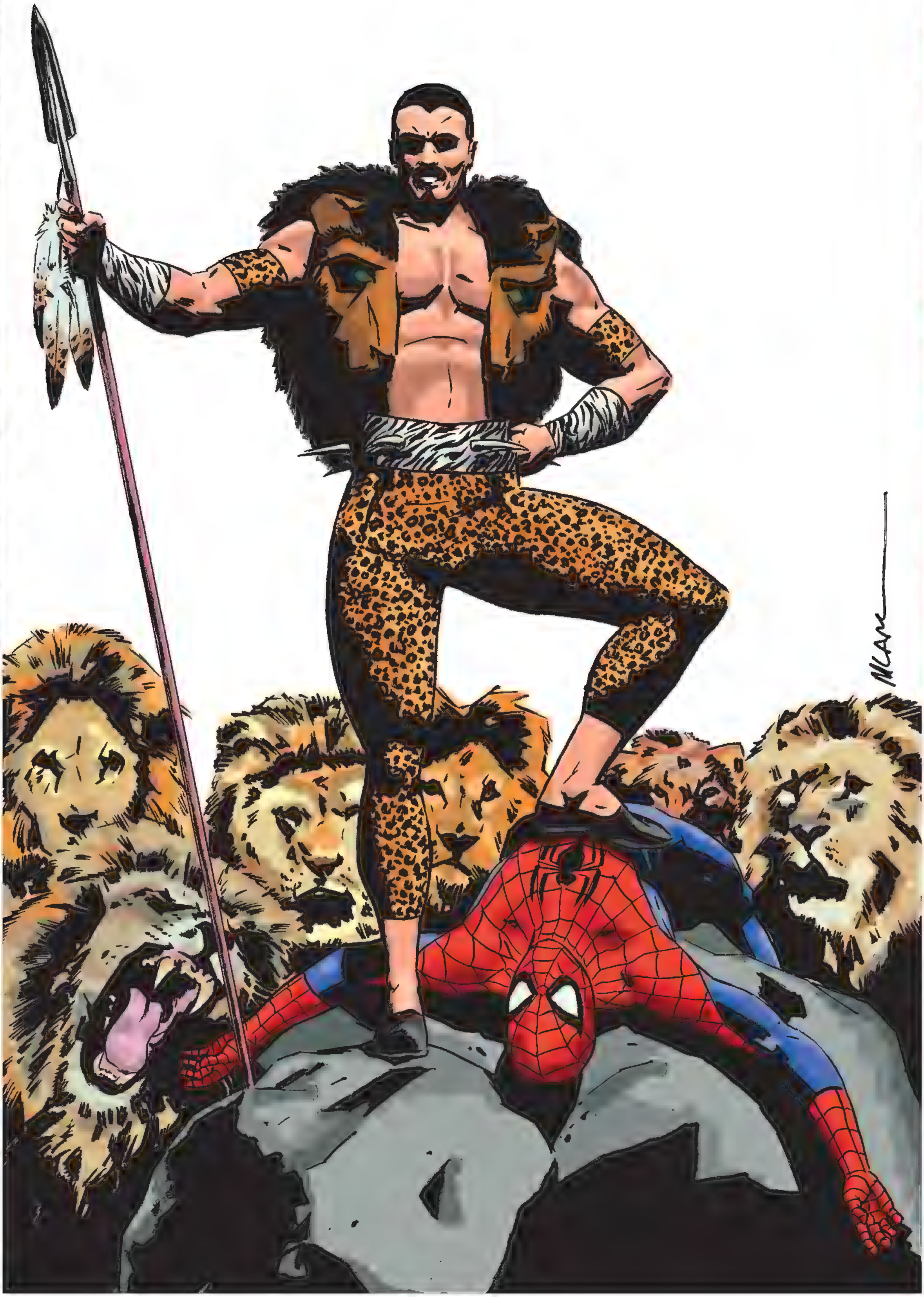
ASCENSEUR HORS SERVICE

BUT YOU ARE A DUSTY OLD RELIC.

"AND I DO NOT FEEL LIKE SHARING MY KILL."

GAUNTLET: ORIGINS
BRIDE OF THE HUNTER

FRED VAN LENTE writer
PHILLIPE BRIONES artist
JODI WYNNE colors
VC's JOE CARAMAGNA letters



SPIDER-MAN: ORIGIN OF THE HUNTER

She found the journal in her mother's penthouse three days ago.

Its pages dusty from neglect.

Its lionskin cover faded.

But the words inside--

--laid out in his own hand--

--they were alive with portent.

prey in action before I
hunt. I always study my prey
in action before I begin the hunt. This
observation is CRITICAL and it tells
much about how the prey fights. When
this "Spider-Man" is concerned, I co
see that he wastes his energy on
needless talk. It divides his concentratio
Makes him sloppy. And that makes him
vulnerable. At first, I worry the hu
be unsatisfying. But then I
the means to overc
After a few

The words were his words, the words of her father.

The father she's never known.

The father she's never even met.

Ana Kravinoff remembers reading the words, carefully laid out in her father's own hand, speaking to her, almost directly to her, from beyond the grave.

I always study my prey in action before I begin the hunt.

So as her father advised, she spent weeks learning about her prey, watching the animal stumble through its life.

THE BLUE SHIELD, RIGHT? IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU. MY HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS HAVE BEEN OUT OF CONTROL LATELY...

WHY'RE YOU PICKING ON-- WHOA!

WHUMP

OOOF!

I always study my prey in action before I begin the hunt.

AND ONCE AGAIN...

GOOD WORDS.

GOOD ADVICE.

...THE SPIDER-CHEESE STANDS ALONE.

SHE'LL LIVE BY IT.

SHE CAN SEE WHY HE GAVE HER FATHER--HER FEARED AND VAUNTED FATHER--SO MUCH DIFFICULTY OVER THE YEARS.

TAKE HIM, JACKPOT!

I DON'T EVEN FEEL BAD HITTING YOU GUYS LIKE THIS, WHAT WITH YOUR OBVIOUSLY *EXCELLENT* MEDICAL COVERAGE...

FWAM

KTOK

HE'S FORMIDABLE. RESOURCEFUL.

DANGEROUS.

IN HIS JOURNAL, HER FATHER ADMITTED HE UNDERESTIMATED THE SPIDER.

SHE WON'T MAKE THAT MISTAKE.

HEY GLIDER GUY!

WAIT UP!

SHE'LL WATCH AND WAIT.

AND LEARN.

AND THEN WHEN SHE'S READY...

WHEN THE MOMENT IS PERFECT...

SHE'LL STRIKE.

Not The End.

SPIDER-MAN: GRIM HUNT — THE KRAVEN SAGA

YOU HAVE TO BE KIDDING ME WITH THE SLOUCHING AND THE MOPING.

IT'S *WINTER* IN *NEW YORK*, PARKER!

WHICH IS COOL, NORAH... EXCEPT FOR THE PART WHERE IT'S *WINTER*...IN *NEW YORK*.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE ROADS ARE GOING TO LOOK LIKE IN ABOUT THIRTY SECONDS?

YOU DON'T HAVE A CAR.

AND JUST *TRY* TO GET NEAR THE STORE WITH ALL THE *TOURISTS*.

YOU DON'T HAVE ANY MONEY.

HAS ANYONE EVER ACTUALLY EXPLAINED TO YOU HOW "*CHEERING SOMEONE UP*" WORKS?

NO NEED. I EXUDE AN INFECTIOUS LUST FOR LIFE THAT AUTO-MAKES PEOPLE AROUND ME HAPPY...OR RAGEFUL. IT DEPENDS ON YOUR BODY CHEMISTRY.

IT'S MY "*SUPER-POWER.*"

INTERESTING CHOICE OF WORDS--

SORRY, MOPE-PROOF BARRIER IS IN PLACE.

TAP ME ON THE SHOULDER WHEN YOU'RE READY TO EMBRACE MY SEASON.

DADDY DON'T GET DRUNK THIS CHRISTMAS...

OKAY, FINE...

I'VE SPENT THE LAST FEW WEEKS UP TO MY EARS IN SUPER VILLAINS, LIKE A BIG, EVIL FAMILY REUNION, AND I'M BATTING SOMEWHERE AROUND .250...PROBABLY MORE LIKE .100.

I'M SO DAMN *TIRED*. BUT WHEN I FINALLY *DO* GET TO REST, I HAVE *NIGHTMARES*.

IN SHORT, BEING *SPIDER-MAN* IS KICKING MY *BUTT* RIGHT NOW.

SOUNDS ROUGH, *TYGER*.

I--I WAS JUST TESTING TO SEE IF YOU WERE LISTENING. DID YOU CALL ME "*TIGER*"?

"*TESTING*" INTERESTING CHOICE OF WORDS... TYGER.

TYGER TYGER, BURNING BRIGHT, IN THE FORESTS OF THE NIGHT...

MJ?

WHAT IMMORTAL HAND OR EYE COULD FRAME THY FEARFUL...

HELP ME!!!

GAAAH!

MATTIE FRANKLIN?

PLEASE! THEY HAVE ME AND I CAN'T-- I CAN'T--!

HOW? HOW CAN I HELP YOU?

I'M NOT TALKING TO YOU!

I NEED MY BROTHER!

THE SPYDER.

RRRIIPP

PLEASEEEE

CALM YOURSELF I MUST TRY TO--

MATTIE!

GOD HELP ME, I AM SO WEAK... I MUST MAKE HIM UNDERSTAND...

IT HAS NOT BEEN A TEST...

IT'S BEEN A GAUNTLET, ENGINEERED TO WEAKEN YOU--

A GENTLE NUDGE TO PUT YOU IN THE WRONG PLACE...

...AT THE WORST TIME...AGAIN...

AND AGAIN.

TO WEAKEN YOU...

NOT JUST PHYSICALLY...

FEARFUL SYMMETRY.

OH MY GOD.

PHYSICALLY EMOTIONALLY SPIRITUALLY... YOU ARE UNDER ATTACK...

THE HUNT HAS BEGUN.

YOU HAVE TO--

NO...NOT YET... DAMN IT!

SPIDER-MAN!

SPIDER-MAN!

In what distant deeps or skies burnt the fire of thine eyes?

On what wings dare he aspire
what the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder and what art
could twist the sinews of thy heart?

And when thy heart began to beat,
what dread hand and what dread feet?

What the hammer? What the chain?
in what furnace was thy brain?

What the anvil? What dread grasp
dare its deadly terrors clasp?

I'M SORRY.

ROAR!

NO!!!

MADAME WEB? ARE YOU--

NO...

THAT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE IT WORKED.

THE REALM OF DREAMS... SLENDER WEBS TO TREAD, MATTIE...

FRAGILE.

FRAGILE... GOOD WORD...

THEY'RE TURNING MY BLOOD INTO POISON. SO I CAN'T FIGHT BACK... FINALLY FIGURED IT OUT.

YAY ME.

WE'RE GOING TO DIE HERE, AREN'T WE?

I'LL REACH HIM, MATTIE. I'LL--

CASSANDRA.

...

WE'RE NOT GOING TO DIE... *HERE.*

WHY? WHY IS THIS HAPPENING..?

THE OLDEST REASON IN THE WORLD, YOU PATHETIC LITTLE INSECT...

FAMILY.

YOU'VE BEEN OUT *DREAMWALKING*...

...BAD *WEAVER.*

STAY AWAY FROM HER, YOU LITTLE WITCH! *STAY AWAY!*

MAMA NEEDS *BLOOD* TO FEEL BETTER, *MEAT.*

DON'T WORRY...YOU'LL GET TO PLAY TOO.

NO!

NOOOoooo!

SLEEP, JUST A SHORT WHILE LONGER, MY *LOVE*...MY *LION.*

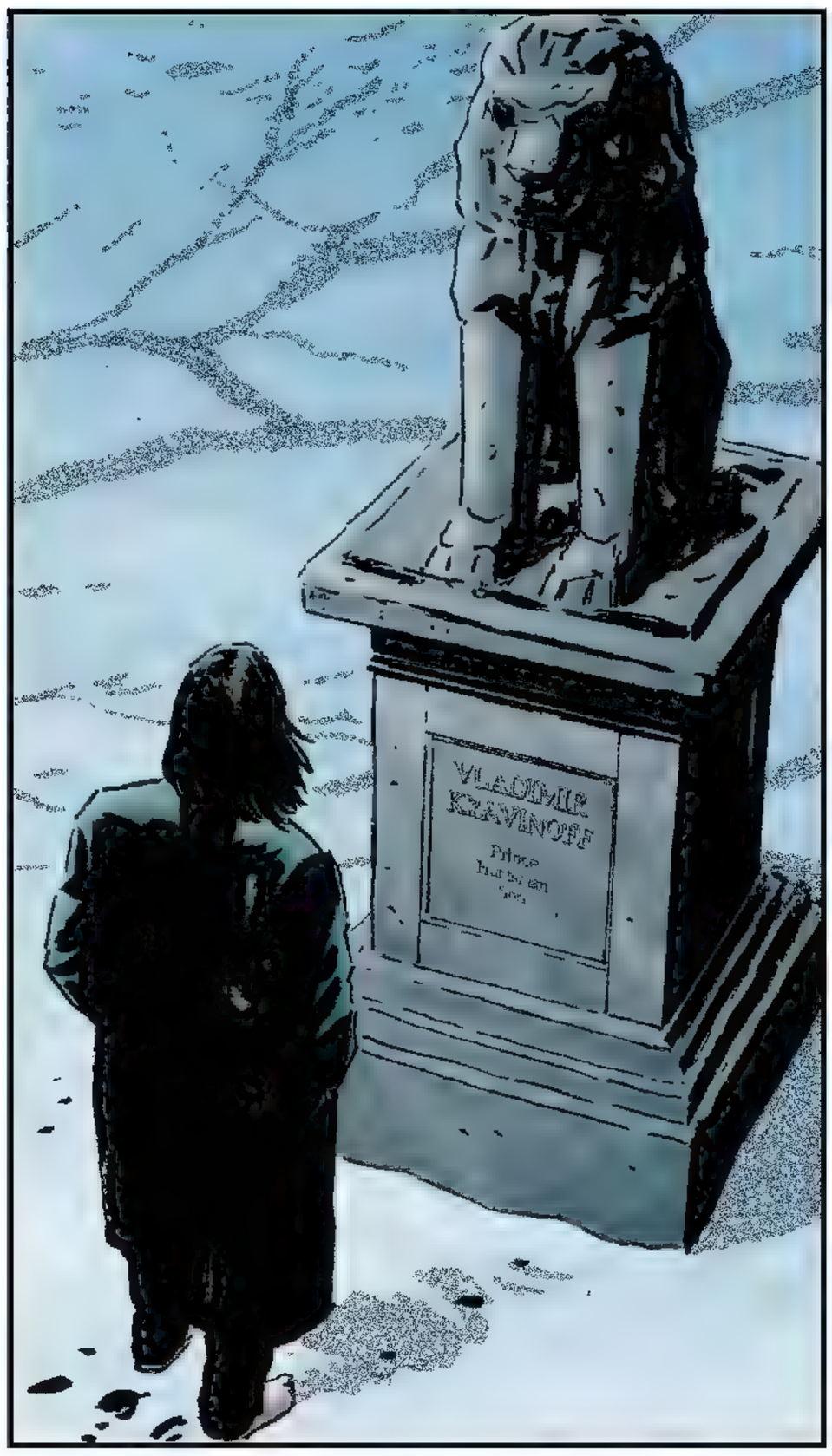
WE'RE COMING FOR YOU.

The Grim Hunt Begins in Amazing Spider-Man #634!

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #634

Months
Ago.

BRAMMOR


VLADIMIR
KRAVINOFF
Prince
Huntsman
Son

VLADIMIR
KRAVINOFF
Prince
Huntsman
Son

"PRINCE..." HEH.

WHAT WILL YOU WRITE ON MY TOMBSTONE, I WONDER?

MM. I COULD THINK OF A FEW CHOICE WORDS....

...THOUGH I POSE A DIFFERENT QUESTION TO YOU, *ALYOSHA*...

WHAT IF TOMBSTONES WERE NO LONGER REQUIRED FOR US? NEITHER THE *LIVING* KRAVINOFFS...

...NOR THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY FALLEN? LIKE YOUR BROTHER HERE.

YOU NEED A HAIRCUT, ALY.

SHUT UP, ANA.

WHY HAVE YOU CALLED ME HERE, SASHA?

TO HUNT, OF COURSE. TO KILL... AND THEN...

SOMETHING VERY, VERY SPECIAL...

FOR *PAPA*.

Today.
CENTRAL PARK ZOO
DELACORTE CLOCK
I HAVE CARRIED MY..."GIFT" FOR MANY, MANY YEARS...
AND ALWAYS, WHEN SOMEONE LEARNS WHAT I CAN DO, WHAT I CAN *SEE*, THEY ASK THE SAME QUESTION...
THE HELL'S UP WITH REX?
DID FOSTER SCREW UP THE FEED SCHEDULE AGAIN?
"*MADAME WEB, DO YOU KNOW WHEN YOU'RE GOING TO DIE?*"
"*OF COURSE I DO.*" I ANSWER, AND INVARIABLY THEY GO SILENT, AFRAID TO ASK MORE. AFRAID THAT I AM AFRAID TO SHARE THE DETAILS.
BUT THERE IS NO *SHAME* IN *DEATH*. DEATH COMES TO ALL THINGS. DEATH IS NATURAL...
MY SHAME COMES FROM OTHER MOMENTS I SEE. THOSE TIMES IN MY LIFE WHEN I WILL BE TESTED...
AND *FAIL*...AT A *COST*. SUCH A *GREAT COST*.
LIKE TODAY.
TODAY, I HAVE FAILED ALL THOSE WHO HAVE EVER CALLED ME FRIEND.
TODAY I BREAK THE WEB.

AAAAAHH--

--CHUUGH!!

AND THAT PRETTY MUCH SUMS IT UP.

NIGHTMARES ALL NIGHT... *SWINE FLU* ALL DAY.

YEAH...*THAT* SWINE FLU. GOD, I HATE MY LIFE...

SPENT THE LAST FEW NIGHTS TRYING TO TRACK DOWN THE LIZARD--*CURT*. GUESS IT CAUGHT UP WITH ME.

GUESS IT'S A LAUNDRY DAY...

LIKE IT MATTERS...EVERYTHING JUST KEEPS GETTING DIRTY. EVERYTHING JUST KEEPS FALLING APART.

LITTLE KIDS DIE AND WIVES ARE LOST AND NOTHING I DO SEEMS TO MAKE A DAMN BIT OF DIFFERENCE...

Screw Laundry.

It's my year off.

KNOCK KNOCK

KNOCK KNOCK

Michele, get that please? It might be the pharmacy and I can't even see right now...

POUND! POUND!

Or... you're working. Like a real live human being...

Coming, Pharmacy Man...

POOM! POOM!

Okay, I appreciate the enthusiasm, but it's just antibiotics...it's not a replacement kidney, dude...

THROUGH THE MUCUS-FILLED PIT THAT IS MY BRAIN, I TRY TO REMEMBER THE LAST TIME WHEN I DIDN'T FEEL TERRIBLE...

I *CAN'T*. LITERALLY. I CANNOT REMEMBER THE LAST TIME I WAS HAPPY... OR EVEN OKAY.

WHO DID I TICK OFF UP THERE?

POOM! POOM!

Hey, a little consideration, pal...

I feel like...

CRAP.

THEY'RE HUNTING US...

KAINE?!

THEY'RE HUNTING SPIDERS.

the GRIM HUNT
chapter 1

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dedicated to J.M DEMATTEIS and MIKE ZECK.

WHAT HAPPENED? WHO--?

THEY'RE HUNTING SPIDERS...

US, PETER...

IS THIS ALL YOUR BLOOD? I HAVE TO GET YOU TO--

WE ARE NOT THE ONLY SPIDERS.

...

HURRY.

AND EVERYTHING CHANGES WITH THE UNEXPECTED RETURN OF MY "EVIL CLONE," AFTER HE APPARENTLY TRIED TO FRENCH KISS A WOOD CHIPPER.

THOUGH FOR A CLONE, HE'S AWFUL HEAVY...MUST WORK OUT.

LUCKILY, MY ADRENALINE SHOOTS THROUGH THE ROOF, AND FOR FIVE SECONDS I FORGET I'M SICK, BECAUSE IF SOMEONE WAS ABLE TO DO THIS TO KAINE...I'M IN FOR A HELL OF A DAY.

KAINE IS THE "STRONGER ONE."

WHO DID THIS TO YOU? WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "THERE ARE OTHERS?"

DAMN IT, KAINE, WAKE UP. WAKE--

BOOM!

EXPLOSIONS. SOUNDS LIKE A FEW BLOCKS AWAY.

NOT A COINCIDENCE, I'M BETTING.

"BAD" IS GOING TO MAKE THE LIGHTSPEED JUMP TO "NIGHTMARE" IF ANYONE COMES TO THE APARTMENT AND FINDS BLOOD ALL OVER AND A GIANT VERSION OF ME PASSED OUT IN THE BATHROOM...

...ESPECIALLY IF IT'S MY ROOMMATE MICHELE. BUT I HAVE TO LEAVE IT FOR NOW, BECAUSE OF WHAT HE SAID, AND HOW HE SAID IT...

"THERE ARE OTHER SPIDERS."

AS A RULE, THE FEMALES OF THE SPECIES ARE TASKED WITH LONG-TERM SURVIVAL.

WE ARE THE TRUE PROTECTORS OF THE WEB, BECAUSE WE ENSURE THE FUTURE.

BABOOM

WHICH IS WHY THEY HIT US FIRST. AS THEY CHIPPED AWAY AT SPIDER-MAN...THE CENTER... THEY PICKED US APART.

JULIA CARPENTER IS NOT THE BEST KNOWN "SPIDER-WOMAN" FOR SURE. ARACHNE, SHE CALLS HERSELF...

THOUGH ONCE AN AVENGER, SHE'S THE LEAST CURRENTLY ENTANGLED WITH OUTSIDERS, HENCE A LOGICAL TARGET.

CORRECTION...SECOND LEAST.

NNNGH

DAMN IT!

IF YOU'RE TRYING TO HAIL A CAB...

...YOU'RE GOING ABOUT IT ALL WRONG...

THEY'RE ON THE GROUND.

SH- SHUT-- -HFF!--- UP...

OKAY, GOOD, WE'RE SKIPPING FORMALITIES. I HATE ALL THAT AWKWARD SILENCE STUFF--

MOVE!!

BLOOM!!

MY SPIDER-SENSE... I DIDN'T EVEN GET A TINGLE...HOW--?

OH, HELL.

IS *HE* SUPPOSED TO BE HERE?

SOMETIMES. THE SEER PLAYS GAMES... SCARED?

HOW DARE YOU--?

GOOD. JUST DON'T CHASE THESE TWO OFF WITH YOUR BIG ***EXPLOSIONS*** LIKE YOU DID THE ***BROTHER.***

WE KICK SOME KRAVEN BUTT RIGHT HERE; YOU GONNA CLUE ME IN TO WHAT'S GOING ON?

LET'S START WITH THE BUTT-KICKING AND NEGOTIATE THE REST LATER...BECAUSE FRANKLY I DON'T HAVE A CLUE.

ALYOSHA, RIGHT?

FREDDIE MERCURY CALLED AND WANTS HIS VEST BACK.

NO JOKES, THIS TIME, SPIDER. THIS IS THE *GRIM HUNT.*

AND THIS IS US TEARING YOU A FEW NEW ONES--

SPYDER SPYDER, BURNING BRIGHT, IN THE FORESTS OF THE NIGHT--

WATCHING WITH YOUR SADDENED EYES, WAITING IN YOUR WEB TO DIE--

ARACHNE!

YOU CAME TO THE PARTY EARLY, BUT I'LL TAKE THE KILL WHERE I CAN GET IT--

BULL. I'M GETTING OFF THIS CRAZY TRAIN RIGHT H--

BLAM

H-NNNGH!

THAT CLEARED THE SINUSES...BUT BYE-BYE HEARING. EXCEPT, WHAT'S WEIRD...OTHER THAN EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED IN THE LAST TEN MINUTES OF MY LIFE--

--IS THAT I DON'T HAVE THE HIGH-PITCHED WHINE THAT USUALLY ACCOMPANIES HEARING LOSS...INSTEAD--

I HEAR DRUMS.

THICK, SLOW DRUMS.

OKAY, ENOUGH OUT OF YOU, PSYCHO-GIRL--SPIDER-MAN!

WHAT THE HELL? YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE FRESH ONE!

I'M HAVING AN OFF DECADE.

NNNGH

WE SHOULD RUN.

No... I think we should run...

ALYOSHA, YOU IDIOT! HE'S NOT READY!

FOCUS!

THEY'VE BEEN AT ME SINCE TEN THIS MORNING. NO CLUE HOW THEY FOUND ME OR WHAT THEY WANT--

I'M NO PSYCHIC, BUT I THINK THEY WANT YOU DEAD.

I FORGOT WHAT A JACKASS YOU CAN BE. THAT'S WHY WE NEVER DATED.

AND YOU BIT MY COSTUME.

GLAD TO SEE YOU DON'T HOLD A GRUDGE. AND DID YOU REALLY CONSIDER DATING ME--?

YOU SOUND LIKE HELL.

WOULD YOU BELIEVE SWINE FLU ON TOP OF EVERYTHING?

GOD, WERE YOU A SERIAL PUPPY STRANGLER IN A PAST LIFE OR SOMETHING? WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

THE FASHION PLATES ARE ANA AND ALOYSHA KRAVINOFF--

AS IN "*KRAVEN THE HUNTER.*" GOT IT. WHY ARE THEY AFTER ME?

NOT JUST YOU. "*THEY'RE HUNTING SPIDERS*", APPARENTLY. WHICH REMINDS ME, I ***REALLY*** HAVE TO GET BACK TO MY APARTMENT--

NOT UNTIL WE HIT THE ***WHY?*** I'M NOT PICKING THEM UP PSYCHICALLY, SO HIT IT--

THERE ENDS MY EXPOSITION, JULIA... SORRY. MAYBE IT'S A REVENGE THING? KRAVEN OFFED HIMSELF BECAUSE OF ME, AND THEY NEVER REALLY GOT OVER IT.

THAT'S COMPASSIONATE.

IT'S THE H1N1 TALKING, REALLY.

EVEN IF THEY ARE OUT FOR BLOOD, IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE "*FAMILY.*" YOU SORT OF DO YOUR OWN THING, USUALLY--

THEY KICKED THE LIVING HELL OUT OF MY CLONE.

YOU HAVE A "*CLONE*"?

YEAH, A COUPLE--AND FOR THE RECORD I HAD THEM ***WAY BEFORE EVERYONE*** WAS GETTING REPLACED BY SKRULLS. TALK ABOUT "*BITERS...*"

GOD, YOU'RE STUPID.

YEAH, I GET THAT WAY WHEN I START FEELING LIKE I'M CAUGHT UP IN SOMETHING ***REALLY***, REALLY SCARY...

SPEAKING OF...

DO YOU HEAR DRUMS?

ACTUALLY--

THEY WILL BE *BLIND*. FOR THIS, I TAKE NO CREDIT. IT'S JUST *MAGIC*. BUT IT WILL MAKE THINGS...*DIFFICULT*.

MOVE!!

MY BETRAYALS GO MUCH DEEPER.

NNGH!

THUNT

I KNOW YOU WON'T BELIEVE THIS...

BUT I THINK I FEEL SORRY FOR YOU. FOR WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN.

NNNGH!

TOO LATE FOR PITY, BROTHER... IT HAS ALREADY HAPPENED.

MOTHER HAS SEEN TO EVERYTHING.

DAMN, I HATE THIS KID... *SPIDEY?* I'M HIT...

HE HAS BEEN THROUGH SO MUCH ALREADY...THEY'VE WEAKENED HIM SO...

HOW MUCH MORE CAN HE TAKE BEFORE THE INEVITABLE?

Y'KNOW... FOR A GUY WHO LIKES BIG GUNS...

...YOU HAVE A REAL BAD HABIT OF GETTING TOO CLOSE...

YOUR *FATHER* WOULD BE *DISAPPOINTED.*

THE WEB IS *BROKEN*, SO THERE IS LITTLE THAT I CAN SEE...BUT FROM TIME TO TIME, A *STRAND* APPEARS...

ALWAYS WOVEN BY *HIM*. HE IS THE ONLY ONE WHO MIGHT *STOP THIS*. THE ONLY ONE WHO MIGHT REPAIR THE WEB...

HGHH!

IF I HAVEN'T SABOTAGED HIS CHANCES.

THANK GOD...

YAAAAAGH!

NOW *THAT* SOUNDS LIKE THE KRAVEN JUNIOR I KNOW. A WHINING, SCREAMING *FAILURE*.

AND *YOU* JUST *ZIP IT*, FREAKSHOW!

WHOOLFF!

WHAT DO YOU WANT?! WHY ARE YOU HUNTING "SPIDERS"? WHY--? WHY...

WHY WON'T YOU LEAVE ME ALONE...?

HEH... WAIT UNTIL YOU SEE...

DOUM BOOM BOOM

YOU'RE GOING TO LOVE IT.

OH, MAN. MY HEAD.

PREPARE, SPYDER! THE END HAS COME!

THE GRIM HUNT IS HERE!

SHE'S SAYING SOMETHING IN HER CUTE LITTLE PSYCHOPATH VOICE, BUT I DON'T CATCH IT...

BOOM BOOM BOOM

BOOM

...NOT OVER THE *DRUMS*...AND THE THOUGHT THAT I MIGHT FINALLY GET SOME SLEEP.

"YOUR LIFE HAS BEEN A *DISASTER*...

"IF IT'S EVEN *ACCURATE* TO CALL IT A LIFE. IS IT, KAINE?

P-PETER...?

NNNGHG

"DO YOU BELIEVE THAT YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO THIS?

"TO BREATHE AND EAT AND DRINK OF THE EARTH LIKE A *REAL BOY?*

"YOU AREN'T REAL."

YOU'RE BARELY A *SPIDER*. JUST A SPIDER'S *BROTHER*, SORT OF.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH YOU, KAINE.

I JUST DON'T KNOW.

"KILLING YOU SEEMS LIKE...A *REWARD*.

"A REWARD FOR STEALING THE SPIDER'S LIFE AND *TWISTING* IT INTO SOMETHING VERY *UGLY*.

"SO *UGLY*...

"SO IT'S DECIDED THEN... *PUNISHMENT* INSTEAD..."

YOU GET LIFE.

AAAAAAGH!

SKLUTCHH

DON'T LOOK SO SAD.

WHEN THIS IS OVER...YOU'LL FINALLY BE SOMEONE.

"YOU'LL BE THE ONLY SPIDER LEFT...EVEN IF YOU ARE AN *UGLY* ONE."

...

DAMN IT TO HELL.

...DRUMS... REALLY...HATE THAT SONG...

DEHYDRATION. DRINK SOMETHING.

ARACHNE... JULIA...ARE WE OKAY?

THAT'S A LOADED QUESTION...

WHERE THE HELL ARE WE?
MATTIE FRANKLIN'S APARTMENT. YOU KNOW--
"SPIDER-WOMAN"... THE *OTHER* ONE.
IT WAS THE CLOSEST PLACE I COULD THINK OF. YOU'RE HEAVY WHEN YOU'RE UNCONSCIOUS.
MATTIE...? GOD...
WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED HERE?
STOP ASKING THAT. STOP ASKING QUESTIONS AND START GIVING ME *ANSWERS!*
I DON'T KNOW--
WHAT HAPPENED TO MATTIE? YOU SMELL IT, RIGHT--? THE BLOOD...?
WHAT IS THE "*GRIM HUNT*"? WHAT DOES IT HAVE TO DO WITH "*SPIDERS*"? WHY ARE THOSE SICK MONSTERS AFTER ME?!
I DON'T KNOW, *OKAY?* I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S HAPPENING OR WHY ANY OF YOU ARE INVOLVED!
BUT WE'LL *FIX* IT, OKAY? WE'LL FIGURE IT OUT AND MAKE IT BETTER--
I SINCERELY DOUBT THAT...
...BECAUSE YOU HAVE BEEN UNDER ATTACK FOR *MONTHS*, AND NOT EVEN KNOWN IT...

THIS IS A WAR BETWEEN TRIBES...

SPIDERS AND THE HUNTERS.

A WAR WE ARE ALREADY LOSING.

EZEKIEL..?

SHE'S STILL NOW. HAS BEEN FOR HOURS.

"ACCEPTANCE" THEY CALL IT, IN THE FIVE STAGES OF GRIEF. BUT SHE IS NOT WITHOUT QUESTIONS...

...AND MATTIE KNOWS I HAVE ANSWERS.

IS IT GOING TO HURT?

...

FORGET IT. I KNOW IT'S NOT GOING TO TICKLE. I JUST WISH I KNEW WHY.

ALL I EVER DID WAS TRY TO BE...GOOD. I KNOW I WASN'T THE BEST SPIDER-WOMAN--

YOU WERE A FINE SPIDER-WOMAN--

BUT IT DIDN'T MATTER. SOME CRAZY WITCH HAS SPIDER-MAN ON THE BRAIN AND...NONE OF IT MATTERED.

THAT'S NOT TRUE. *NEVER* THINK THAT. YOU SAVED *LIVES.*

"*SAVE ONE LIFE, SAVE A THOUSAND.*" THAT IS THE TRUE STRENGTH OF THE WEB OF *LIFE*--

WHO'S GOING TO SAVE MY LIFE?

...

WILL... WILL I BE AVENGED? WILL ANYONE CARE?

I WILL CARE, MATTIE.

AND *YES*... THERE WILL BE *BALANCE.*

THEN THAT'LL HAVE TO BE ENOUGH.

LET HIM KNOW, WILL YOU..? LET *SPIDER-MAN* KNOW THAT I DON'T BLAME HIM...AND THAT I DIDN'T CRY.

I PROMISE.

I DON'T KNOW WHY THAT'S IMPORTANT, BUT... THANK YOU.

KRA-KOOM

IT'S TIME, GENTLEMEN.

INTRIGUING, TRULY. I HAVE BEEN ALIVE FOR A LONG WHILE, AND THIS IS--

INTRIGUING.

NOT TO RUIN THE MOOD, BUT CAN WE GET ON WITH THIS?

I WOULD NOT HAVE PEGGED YOU FOR SQUEAMISH, DILLON--

I'M NOT. BUT I...I BELIEVE IN *GOD*, AND THIS NONSENSE...

FORGET IT, I MADE A DEAL. YOU PAY, I STAY.

WE ALL PAY, MR. DILLON.

VERY DIFFICULT TO MAKE. ***EXPENSIVE***, USE ONLY THREE DROPS. ***THREE*** EACH TIME.

USE IT WITHIN THE WEEK.

I ONLY NEED THREE DAYS.

MATTIE FRANKLIN...THE THREAD OF HER LIFE WOVEN TWENTY YEARS AGO.

IT HAS BEEN KNOTTED BY CONFLICT, SERVICE, AND ULTIMATELY...TRAGEDY, NOT OF HER OWN MAKING.

BECAUSE OF A MAN WHO LOST HIS WAY, AND BLAMED INSANITY ON A SPYDER.

HAIL MARY, FULL OF GRACE, THE LORD IS WITH THEE...

BECAUSE OF A HUNTRESS DESPERATE TO RESTORE HER PACK TO GREATNESS...

BUT ABOVE ALL, BECAUSE I WAS TOO WEAK TO PROTECT HER.

ELECTRO, NOW.

I ***KNEW*** I WOULD BE TOO WEAK TO RESIST THE POISONS AND TORTURES OF THE KRAVENS...

...THAT I WOULD TURN ON MY "FAMILY," EXPOSE THEIR SECRETS...

AND DAMN MY SOUL... I COULDN'T EVEN LOOK HER IN THE EYE AND ADMIT IT.

AND WHILE I LIVE ON AS A COWARD IN MY CELL...

...MATTIE HOLDS TRUE TO HER WORD. SHE DOES NOT CRY OUT.

HER THREAD IS CUT.

AND ALL OF THE THREADS CONNECTED TO IT, BOTH PAST AND THOSE TO COME...

...*UNRAVEL*...LEAVING A VOID THAT CUTS THROUGH ME LIKE ICE.

BUT SHE DOES NOT SCREAM...

BY ALL THAT IS HOLY... I BEG YOU, *SPIDER-MAN*...

BOOM

...RUN.

GWARRRR

V-VLADIMIR..? THAT...THAT IS NOT *BROTHER--*

NO. NOT ANY MORE.

THEN WE FAILED?

OF COURSE NOT...

WE CONFIRMED WHAT I SUSPECTED... IT *MUST* BE HIM.

TO BRING MY BELOVED BACK FROM THE DEAD... WE *WILL* NEED THE BLOOD OF THE SPYDER...

THE ONE TRUE SPYDER.

To Be Continued...

"DO YOU REMEMBER THIS FEELING?"

THE *RUSH* AS YOU CLOSE IN ON YOUR PREY...

THE ANTICIPATION?

WE'RE SO VERY CLOSE. SO CLOSE TO HOLDING *HIM* AGAIN...

PAPA WILL BE SO PROUD OF YOU, VLADIMIR. SO PROUD OF *US ALL.*

ALYOSHA...?

MORE.

FIND ME MORE *SPIDERS.* THE HOUR DRAWS NEAR.

BLOOD DEMANDS *BLOOD...*

I WOULD PRAY FOR THE STRENGTH TO RESIST...

...BUT AS I HEAR THE *THING* EAT BEHIND ME, HIS HEART BEATING BECAUSE OF MY *DEAD FRIEND...*

...I KNOW THAT NO ONE WOULD LISTEN EVEN IF I TRIED.

DON'T THROW UP. THROWING UP INSIDE OF THE MASK IS BAD.

BUT GOD, THE SMELL OF HIM.

SPIDER-MAN? PLEASE DON'T PASS OUT... PLEASE--

YOU SEE HIM, RIGHT? PLEASE TELL ME YOU SEE HIM AND I'M NOT CRAZY.

I WISH I *ONLY* SAW HIM...

APOLOGIES. I DIDN'T GET A CHANCE TO SHOWER ON THE WAY BACK FROM *HELL*...I'M ON A TIGHT *SCHEDULE*.

THE *HUNTERS ARE COMING*, AND IF YOU DON'T GET YOUR ACT TOGETHER...

...I WON'T BE THE *ONLY ONE COMING BACK FROM THE DEAD TONIGHT*.

EZEKIEL.

FOR A WHILE, HE WAS A MENTOR. A FRIEND. THEN A *TRAITOR*...

...AND FINALLY A *SAVIOR* WHO SACRIFICED HIMSELF TO SAVE ME.

I BURIED HIM. HENCE THE SMELL.

WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE?

the GRIM HUNT
chapter 2

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H--HOW?

I'LL TRY TO KEEP IT SIMPLE... I KNOW THAT YOU DON'T *BELIEVE* IN THE THE *SPIRITUAL SIDE* OF YOUR POWER--

YEAH, WELL RIGHT NOW YOU'RE MAKING A REALLY STRONG CASE FOR IT...STANDING THERE AND LEAKING SPIDERS ALL OVER THE PLACE...

TRUST ME, I DIDN'T VOLUNTEER.

BUT *HER CHILDREN* ARE BEING HUNTED... SO SHE SENT ME BACK THROUGH THE *UNSEEN PLACES* TO WARN YOU.

BACKSTORY. NOW.

THE IDEA IS THAT ALL OF THE "SPIDERS" LIKE YOU AND ME AND HIM WERE CHOSEN BY A BIG OL' SPIDER-GODDESS...

ARE YOU SERIOUS?

JULIA...WE'RE TALKING TO A REANIMATED CORPSE.

IT'S TIME TO TAKE A FEW THINGS ON FAITH.

"THE ANIMUS. PRIMAL ENERGIES OF THE WORLD... SERGEI KRAVINOFF, 'KRAVEN THE HUNTER' AS YOU CALLED HIM, WAS CONNECTED TO THE SPIRIT WORLD IN A PROFOUND WAY-- THROUGH DARK MAGIC...

THAT CONNECTION DROVE HIM TO MADNESS, AND THE BELIEF THAT THE ONLY WAY TO TRULY BEAT YOU WAS TO BECOME YOU--

--AFTER WHICH HE TOOK HIS OWN LIFE. THE LAST HUNT.

THANKS FOR THE DRAG DOWN MEMORY LANE, BUT I WAS THERE.

YOU DON'T FORGET BEING BURIED ALIVE.

THE SORT OF CONNECTION THAT KRAVEN HAD TO THE UNSEEN PLACES DOES NOT END WHEN THE FLESH DIES.

SASHA KRAVINOFF KNOWS THIS...AND ARMED WITH THE TRUTH, SHE BEGAN PLOTTING HER CAMPAIGN AGAINST YOU...AGAINST SPIDERS.

YOU MUST HAVE FELT IT, ***SPIDER-MAN...*** THE ***PUMMELING*** YOU'VE TAKEN OVER THESE PAST WEEKS...

WEAKENING YOU...PHYSICALLY, MENTALLY, SPIRITUALLY...TO ***PRIME*** YOU FOR THIS ***GRIM HUNT.***

HUNT ME AND THEN WHAT?

BUILD A ***GALLOWS*** FROM THE BODIES OF OUR *"SPIDER-BROTHERS AND SISTERS"...*

TWIST THE ***WEB*** THAT BINDS US INTO A ***NOOSE*** AROUND YOUR NECK...

BECAUSE BLOOD DEMANDS BLOOD...AND ONLY A ***GREAT*** SACRIFICE WILL UNLEASH ENOUGH ***POWER*** TO BRING ***SERGEI KRAVINOFF*** BACK FROM THE DEAD.

SO PEOPLE... PEOPLE ARE BEING ***HUNTED***...BECAUSE OF ME?

NOT *"PEOPLE."* *SPIDERS...*

HUNTED AND ***KILLED. MATTIE FRANKLIN*** IS DEAD. ***MADAME WEB*** IS ALIVE ONLY BECAUSE OF WHAT SHE CAN SEE--

NO...

KAINE MAY NOT SURVIVE... AND THERE ARE ***MORE--***

NO. NO MORE. DO YOU KNOW WHO'S NEXT?

I CAME TO HELP YOU BUILD AN ***ARMY***...YOU'LL HAVE TO LET GO OF--

WHO IS NEXT?

Alphabet City.

THE APARTMENT OF PETER PARKER AND MICHELE GONZALES.

PARKER!

ARE YOU DEAD YET?

IF NOT, I BROUGHT YOU SOME TEA AND CHICKEN SOUP IF YOU DRAG YOUR UNEMPLOYED BUTT--

--OFF THE COUCH...?

YOU CLEANED UP. SOMEONE'S FEELING BETTER... OR THE FEVER GOT TO HIS BRAIN...

YOU REALLY MUST BE SICK, KID. AFTER *MONTHS* OF MY RAGGING ON YOU, YOU DECIDE TO SHOVEL UP YOUR UNDERWEAR PILE AS I'M GOING *OUT OF TOWN?*

PETE?

OOOOH KAY?

AÑYA CORAZON IS *SPECIAL*. SHE DIDN'T FALL INTO THE *WEB* LIKE SO MANY OTHERS...NOT EVEN *HIM*...

SHE TRULY WAS *CHOSEN*, FOR A DESTINY I CANNOT FORESEE...

WHOEVER YOU ARE, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR PROBLEM IS--

--BUT WHY DON'T YOU STOP ACTING LIKE A CHICKEN AND JUST FACE ME ALREADY?

...ONE SHE MAY NOT LIVE TO FULFILL.

SHE IS RECKLESS. FEARLESS. BEAUTIFUL IN HER FLAWS. BUT SHE'S SO YOUNG...

...IT'S A MIRACLE SHE SURVIVED THIS LONG.

GRRRRRRRR

I TAKE IT BACK.

IT WAS BETTER WHEN YOU WERE JUST THROWING THINGS AT ME.

GWRAWRRRR!

HOLY--!

WHO ARE YOU?

WHAT DO YOU WANT?

JUST SOME BLOOD, LITTLE SISTER--

NNGH

MOVE IT, SPIDER-GIRL!

NO!

DUDE, IT'S ARAÑA--

NO TIME! JUST--

GRRRRRRRR

RUN!

GRWARR!

SANTA MARIA...

DOOM DOOM DOOM

THE *DRUMS* AGAIN. SMELL OF *FRESH EARTH*. FEVER...

IF I WASN'T IN SO MUCH PAIN I'D THINK I WAS GOING INSANE.

MARODOOOW

KRAKKT

S'OKAY... JULIA'S HERE. SHE'S GOT OUR BACKS--

UM, SPIDEY? YOU GOT YOUR GENDERS BENT.

AND JUST LIKE THAT... I *KNOW* I'M GOING INSANE.

BECAUSE I'M WATCHING *MYSELF* FIGHT THAT CRAZY SIDESHOW ESCAPEE.

LOOK WHO WANTS TO BE A REAL BOY!

KAINE... I...

MYSELF...MY *CLONE*...KAINE. THIS NIGHT GETS MORE *SURREAL* BY THE SECOND.

DON'T JUST STAND THERE, YOU IDIOT! MOVE!

GWRARRRR!

WHAT HE SAID!!

RAAAAR!

OKAY, CYNICISM ON PAUSE...THE ZOMBIE WAS RIGHT.

GO... GO....

I HAVE A FEELING YOU'RE GONNA TELL ME A HELL OF A STORY IF WE SURVIVE THIS.

YOU WON'T.

HNNGH

SKLITCH

AAAAGH!

I GOT THIS.

SHRIIIP

NO, ARAÑA! RUN!

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, LITTLE WOODEN BOY?

WE HAVE WRITTEN THE FUTURE ALREADY! DON'T YOU WANT TO LIVE HAPPILY EVER AFTER?

I'M GONNA RIP OUT YOUR TONGUE BEFORE THIS IS OVER, GIRL.

DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM

PSYCHIC WEBBING ISN'T EXACTLY WORKING HERE--ANY SUGGESTIONS?!

GRAAAAR!

JULIA...NO... TOLD YOU TO HANG BACK...

I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON HERE, CHAKA--

BUT I WANT TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON HANGING ON TO THAT LOOK UNTIL IT CAME BACK INTO STYLE.

YOU'RE *NEW*, AREN'T YOU?

DON'T MESS AROUND... SERIOUS--

=KAFF!=

FFFFFFT

I'M GOING TO TEACH YOU SOME RESPECT BEFORE VLADIMIR GETS YOU.

WE HAVE WHAT WE CAME FOR, KRAVINOFFS!

LET HER GO!

THWOK

NNNGN!

SCREW THIS.

YOU'RE BURNING UP. WHAT THE HELL DID THEY DO TO YOU?

NO TIME... GETTING AWAY... NO...

NO MORE BLOOD... SPIDERS... THEY'RE KILLING SPIDERS... HAVE TO...

I TASTE YOUR FEAR FROM HERE, SPYDER!

KNOW THAT YOU DIE TONIGHT, BATHED IN THE BLOOD OF YOUR CLAN BEFORE YOUR SACRIFICE!

KNOW THIS!

COME BACK--!

STOP. YOU'RE IN NO CONDITION--

LET GO! IT'S BECAUSE OF ME! ALL OF THIS IS BECAUSE OF ME--

SO WHAT?

"SO WHAT?"

THEY'RE NOT YOUR REAL *FAMILY*, PETER. THEY'RE JUST *BAIT*. AND IF YOU TRY TO HELP THEM, YOU'LL WIND UP *DEAD*.

THE KRAVENS HAVE *MADAME WEB*. THAT MEANS THEY HAVE THE *FUTURE*. ALL THE ANGLES HAVE BEEN FIGURED.

PLAYED ME LIKE A DAMN VIOLIN..."*THEY'RE HUNTING SPIDERS.*" IF I HADN'T COME TO YOU--

BUT YOU *DID*. YOU DID BECAUSE WE'RE *CONNECTED*.

BULL. I DID IT BECAUSE I WAS BLEEDING OUT AND THEY KNEW I WAS A COWARD.

YOU KNOW I *HATE YOU*. I HATE EVERYTHING ABOUT YOU, BUT FOR ONCE...LISTEN TO ME.

GUILT HAS *ALWAYS* BEEN YOUR ACHILLES HEEL, PETER. AND THIS TIME IT WILL GET YOU *KILLED*.

THEY TOOK THIS FIGHT TO US. WE HAVE TO FINISH IT. HELP THE OTHERS--

I'M STRONGER THAN YOU IN EVERY WAY AND THEY *STILL* TORE ME A NEW ONE--*WITHOUT* THE FREAKIN' LION-THING...

I OWE YOU BECAUSE YOU SAVED ME. GOOD ADVICE IS THE ONLY CURRENCY I HAVE.

SHHHT

I'VE *FOUGHT* THE FATHER. THE WHOLE *BLOODLINE* IS OUT OF THEIR MINDS OVER YOU. THEY WILL *NEVER* GIVE UP THIS *HUNT*...

...NOT UNTIL YOU'RE DEAD. YOU *CAN'T WIN* THIS FIGHT.

RUN.

RUN AND SCREW THE REST.

KRAKT!

I KNOW YOU'VE HAD A CRAPPY LIFE, AND DONE BAD THINGS, I GET IT...BUT I NEVER REALIZED WHAT A PIECE OF GARBAGE YOU WERE UNTIL THIS MOMENT.

HOW CAN YOU SHARE MY DNA AND BE SO *DAMN SELFISH?*

WE'VE ALL BEEN HURT! WE'VE ALL SUFFERED! BUT THE *REAL* DIFFERENCE BETWEEN US IS THAT I *NEVER* USED IT AS A *CRUTCH*.

YOU CALL IT "*GUILT*"...I CALL IT ***RESPONSIBILITY***, AND BY GOD, EVEN IF IT MEANS WALKING INTO THE LION'S DEN AND NOT COMING OUT...

...I'M NOT GOING TO STAND BY AND *LET* PEOPLE *DIE* TO SAVE MYSELF.

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, I'M ENDING THIS TONIGHT.

THEN WE'D BETTER GET GOING.

UNLESS YOU'D LIKE TO KEEP SOLILOQUIZING IN THE RAIN...

I'LL WAIT.

WHERE DID THEY TAKE THEM--?

FORGIVE ME, BUT YOU'RE TOO WEAK TO DO THIS ALONE AND I'M HARDLY MORE THAN A GHOST...

WE NEED MORE SPIDERS, AND I KNOW WHERE TO FIND TWO OF THE STRONGEST.

THE "***TWIN MONSTERS.***" ***VENOM*** AND ***ANTI-VENOM.***

THAT'S THE BEST INSANE IDEA I'VE HEARD ALL NIGHT. WHERE?

FOLLOW ME.

Fifteen Miles North of New York City...

"...SO ALL OF IT, THIS WHOLE *GAUNTLET* I'VE BEEN RUNNING--

INFLUENCED BY SASHA KRAVEN THANKS TO MADAME WEB'S HELP.

IF IT MAKES YOU FEEL BETTER, THE FORTUNE TELLER ENDURED *INTENSE* TORTURE BEFORE FINALLY SUCCUMBING...

IT DOESN'T.

SO THIS MAMA KRAVEN LADY'S GOT ALL OF THOSE GUYS IN HER POCKET?

NOT ALL. WITH A FEW SHE STRUCK DEALS, BUT REMEMBER, THIS IS ABOUT *FAMILY*.

SHE USED CASSANDRA'S FORESIGHT TO NUDGE THEM...OR YOU...TO TANGLE THE WEB, SO TO SPEAK.

SHE HATES TO *SULLY* HERSELF WITH THOSE BENEATH HER.

IT'S BAD FORM TO TALK LIKE THAT IN FRONT OF THE HELP, DIMITRI.

NO.

SORRY, PAL... "IN THIS ECONOMY" YOU TAKE WHAT YOU CAN GET...

AND I GOT A LOT.

"SPIDER GODDESS RETURNED ME FROM THE GRAVE TO HELP YOU..."

HOW DOES THAT SUBHUMAN FRAME OF YOURS SUPPORT SUCH EGO?

LET'S NOT FORGET A HELL OF A PERFORMANCE.

PLEASURE WORKING WITH YOU, MYSTERIO.

LIKEWISE, CHAMELEON. WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

NOW..?

WALKED RIGHT INTO IT...HEH...

RIGHT INTO THE WEB...

DOOM

DOOM

NOW WE FINISH.

NOW WE HUNT.

DOOM

DOOM

DOOM

DOOM

RUN, SPYDER. RUN.

MADNESS. MADNESS TAKES HIM.

INDUCED BY DRUGS AND FEVER AND THE WEEKS OF PAIN THAT I DELIVERED UNTO HIM...

BUT STILL...

JULIA! ARAÑA! I--

I'M COMING...

DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM DOOM

MERCIFUL HEAVEN... HE FIGHTS ON.

HE'S ALREADY OUT OF SIGHT... WHY ARE WE GIVING HIM SUCH A LONG HEAD START?

MY PRECIOUS... YOU KNOW THE ANSWER TO THAT...

FEAR MAKES THE BLOOD MORE *POTENT*...

"...FILLS IT WITH THE *NUTRIENTS* YOUR FATHER WILL NEED."

NNNGH!

DOOM DOOM DOOM

Nooooooo!

TAKE HIM.

SPYDER SPYDER DIES TONIGHT...

GIVE IT A REST, YOU TWISTED ABOMINATION. THIS ISN'T A GAME.

...CLIP THE WEB AND SNUFF THE LIGHT...

THE *WOUNDED* ANIMAL IS ALL THE MORE DANGEROUS--

KRSHH

KTHOK

DAMN STRAIGHT!

YOU SHOULD HAVE KILLED ME WHEN YOU HAD THE CHANCE.

SILLY SPYDER...

...WHERE WOULD THE FUN HAVE BEEN IN THAT?

FOR "TRAINED KILLERS," YOU CRAZY IDIOTS TALK TOO MUCH.

KLOK

NO ONE ELSE DIES TONIGHT EXCEPT FOR *LOUD MOUTH HUNTERS--*

KABLAM!

THIS IS THE GUN MY HUSBAND *KILLED HIMSELF* WITH...IT CARRIES HIS *REGRET.*

IT IS ALSO THE LAST THING HE EVER TOUCHED...

PRECIOUS.

BLAMM

NO!!

LEAVE ME! PLEASE...YOU CANNOT SAVE ME AND YOURSELF. YOU--

I DO NOT DESERVE TO BE SAVED.

MAKES TWO OF US.

HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT? YOU...

YOU *HOLD* THE WEB TOGETHER.

WHEN THE WEB IS STRONG...

...THE *WORLD* IS STRONG. DON'T YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW...

...SPECIAL YOU ARE?

NO... NOT UNTIL TONIGHT...

...IT WAS NICE...

...TO SEE WHAT IT WAS LIKE.

SPIDER-MAN!!!

SKRTCHH

SPYDER, SPYDER, FEEL SURPRISE--

--THE WEB IS CUT BEFORE YOUR EYES.

FROM ALL DIMENSIONS FRONT AND BACK... YOUR EYES LONG FOR RELIEF YOU LACK.

THNKT

YOU KNOW WHAT, ANA...HE'S RIGHT...

SKLTCHH

YOU DO TALK TOO MUCH.

HNNNNG

LOSE IT ALL...FALL TO BLACK.

HERE.

ON BEHALF OF MY FAMILY, I THANK YOU FOR YOUR SACRIFICE, SPYDER...

...AND CONDEMN YOUR SOUL TO THE HELL RESERVED FOR COWARDS AND ANIMALS.

I HAVE HEARD MEN DIE BEFORE...BUT NOT LIKE THIS.

LIFE DOES NOT LEAVE HIM IN A BUBBLING DEATH RATTLE...A BLOOD-CHOCKED LAST GASP...

HE SCREAMS WITH EVERY FIBER OF HIS BEING.

IT IS THE SOUND OF *PURE REGRET*. THE CRY OF *WHAT COULD-HAVE-BEEN.*

IT IS THE SADDEST SOUND I WILL EVER HEAR IN MY LIFE.

COME BACK TO US...

YOUR FAMILY CALLS YOU...

YOUR FAMILY NEEDS YOU.

SERGEI...

COME BACK TO ME, MY LOVE!

COME BACK TO ME, HUNTER! KING OF LIONS AND EMPEROR OF THE WILD!

KRAVEN THE HUNTER! YOU ARE *REBORN!*

Next: Kraven Rex

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #636

To The ZOO and CAFETERIA

STAFFORD SAID IT WAS CRAZY LAST NIGHT. THE STORM OR SOMETHING...

ANIMALS DIDN'T SHUT UP ALL NIGHT. DON'T EVEN WANT TO GO NEAR THE GORILLA PADDOCK--

I DREW SHORT STRAW ON THAT LAST TIME--

KRNCHHH

WHAT THE HELL? IS IT, LIKE, SPIDER SEASON OR SOMETHING?

DO SPIDERS GET A SEASON? I DON'T... JEEZ...

LOOK AT THEM... EVERY-WHERE.

IS THAT SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN? DO THEY ALL JUST...DIE LIKE THAT?

THE HELL...DO I KNOW...

OH GOD.

"WHAT I HAVE DONE FOR YOU, BELOVED..."

...NOT SINCE ISIS AND OSIRIS HAS A WIFE SACRIFICED SO MUCH FOR HER HUSBAND...

...TO CHEAT DEATH ITSELF...

CALL STAFFORD--

SHHH. VERY. SLOWLY.

I PUT YOU TOGETHER AGAIN, MY LOVE. I MISSED YOU...SO DEARLY...

BUT NOT JUST ME. THE *WORLD* WAS... *WRONG* WITHOUT YOU.

"EVERYTHING HAS GROWN *FAT* AND *WEAK*... INSTITUTIONS AND INDIVIDUALS ALIKE..."

I NEEDED MY *HUSBAND*...

BUT THIS WORLD *CRIED OUT* FOR A *HUNTER*. THE *HERD* IS *WEAK*, BECAUSE NO ONE DARES TO THIN IT OUT.

"BUT NOW...

"THE BLOATED AND THE SICK AND THE *INFERIOR* WILL KNOW THEIR PLACE..."

GRAWRRRR

THEY WILL BE HUNTED AND CUT DOWN.

THIS IS THE *LAW*. THIS IS *YOUR LAW* AND *OUR DESTINY* AS A *FAMILY*.

"THE KRAVINOFFS WERE GREAT ONCE.

"NO LONGER WILL WE HIDE IN SHADOWS. NO LONGER WILL WE BROKER DEALS WITH MONGRELS.

"OUR *PRIDE* IS RETURNED.

"MY *LOVE*.

"OUR *HUNTER*."

THIS WORLD IS *FAT* AND *YOU* WILL LEAD US TO CONQUER IT...

BECAUSE THE ONE WHO KILLED YOU IS NO MORE.

"THE *WEB* IS BROKEN...

"THE *SPYDER* GAVE HIS *BLOOD* THAT THE *HUNTER* MAY LIVE AGAIN..."

AND NOW... KRAVEN IS REBORN.

IT IS TIME, SASHA--

the GRIM HUNT
chapter 3

JOE KELLY (w/ ZEB WELLS) script
MARCO CHECCHETTO art, pages 1-18
MICHAEL LARK & STEFANO GAUDIANO art, pgs 19-22

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GALE, KELLY, SLOTT, VAN LENTE, WAID, WELLS webheads
dedicated to J.M DEMATTEIS and MIKE ZECK

--SHOW ME MY "FAMILY."

THIS...THIS IS ALL BECAUSE WE HAVE A SPIDER STRAPPED TO OUR CHESTS?

NO, ARAÑA...

...THIS IS ALL BECAUSE OF *HER*.

THIS IS ALL BECAUSE OF *MADAME WEB*.

THEY KILLED HIM, JULIA. HE'S DEAD...

DON'T THINK ABOUT THAT...

SPIDER-MAN'S DEAD.

THE WEB HAS BEEN TORN...EVERY SPIDER HANGS BY A THREAD.

THE STRANDS MUST BE KNIT AGAIN...

CREEEAK

OR ALL IS LOST. ALL IS--

SNIFF

The Kravinoff Estate.

"AS YOU SLEPT IN YOUR GRAVE, WE ALLOWED OURSELVES NO REST..."

LOOK UPON YOUR FAMILY, HUSBAND. WE'VE GROWN STRONG.

SNIFF SNIFF

WHA--

WE ARE YOUR *FAMILY*, HUSBAND. THERE'S NO NEED TO--

IT IS *ME*, FATHER...

SNIFF SNIFF

TAKE MY SCENT.

ANA. YOU HAVE GROWN.

FATHER...

WE HAVE *ALL* GROWN, HUSBAND. GROWN STRONG THROUGH THE HUNT OF--

WHERE IS VLADIMIR?

SERGEI--

"WHERE IS HE?"

ARACHNE AND ARAÑA. SO LONG THEY HAVE IGNORED THEIR PLACE IN THE WEB... LIVING ON THE FRINGE, ALONE.

STOP!

S-STAY BACK!

THE WEB IS WEAKER FOR IT.

GONNA KILL-- HNNGH!

BUT IT IS NOT DESTROYED.

THESE SPIDERS HAVE THE POWER TO REBUILD IT.

NO!

...IT'S ALL RIGHT. IT'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT.

THEY ARE THE FUTURE.

GRRRRR!

VLADIMIR.
MY SON...
URK!
DOWN.
SNAP!
AWRoOoOoOo.
SERGEI...
CRACK
DOWN!
HE WAS THE *TEST SUBJECT*, SERGEI...TO SEE IF I COULD BRING YOU BACK.
HE HAS SERVED YOU WELL...DO WITH HIM AS YOU WILL.
YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT YOU'VE DONE HERE, SASHA.
NONE OF THIS IS RIGHT...

"...NONE OF IT."

...I JUST DON'T FEEL LIKE WE'VE EVER PROPERLY CLEARED THE AIR. AND NOW IT'S BEEN A WHILE SINCE I'VE EVEN HEARD FROM PETER, AND...

LOOK, MICHELE'S LEAVING TOWN FOR THE WEEK. IF YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO HIM, JUST HEAD OVER THERE AND SAY IT, MJ.

IT'S COMPLICATED, HARRY...

YOU THINK I DON'T KNOW FROM COMPLICATED?

MY DAD KNOCKED UP MY GIRLFRIEND. YOU THINK LILY AND I DIDN'T--

EEEEEE

OH, GOD...

EEEEEE

EEEEEE

EEEEEE

COME ON, WE'LL CROSS AT THE CORNER. IT'S JUST THE RAIN DRAWING THEM OUT...

NO, HARRY... THIS FEELS FAMILIAR.

SOMETHING'S WRONG.

THE WEB IS *LIFE*. IN BREAKING IT, THE KRAVINOFFS HAVE RATTLED ALL OF NATURE.

NORAH, ARE YOU SERIOUS? A MONKEY?

YEP. SMILE, CHIM-CHIM.

I'M TELLIN YA, MOM, BETWEEN THIS AND *LIZARDPALOOZA* LAST WEEK, I REALLY GOTTA GET OUT OF MANHATTAN.

BUT THE SPIDERS... THE SPIDERS FEEL THE VIBRATIONS MOST INTENSELY.

THEY WILL REACT ACCORDING TO THE TRUTH OF THEIR NATURE... BUT KNOW THIS: THERE *WILL* BE A REACTION.

THE KRAVINOFFS HAVE TORN A GREAT HOLE IN THE WEB.

BUT JUST AS NATURE ABHORS A VACUUM...

--SO DO THE SPIDERS.

ALYOSHA... YOU AGREE, RIGHT?

YES, UNCLE. FATHER'S REACTION WAS... *EXCESSIVE.*

HE SENSES WE WILL HAVE NEED OF THE WOMEN. IT IS NOT FOR US TO QUESTION HIM.

YOU'RE *SERIOUS?* I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO'S NOTICED THE "*GREAT HUNTER*" ISN'T ALL THERE?

I TOILED FOR YEARS TO ACHIEVE HIS RESURRECTION, YEARS IN WHICH MY HUSBAND KNEW ONLY THE BLACKNESS OF DEATH. HE WILL NEED TO ADJUST...

HAS ANYONE STOPPED TO CONSIDER THE FACT THAT THIS MAN *SHOT HIMSELF IN THE HEAD?*

HOW DO YOU KNOW HE *WANTED* TO COME BACK?

PAPA...?

YOU'RE UNHAPPY WITH US.

THIS...THIS WASN'T WHAT YOU WANTED.

SOMEHOW... WE HAVE DISAPPOINTED YOU.

PLEASE, TELL ME WHAT TO DO TO MAKE IT BETTER. PLEASE. I HAVE WAITED SO LONG FOR YOU, PAPA...I--

IT CAN'T BE LIKE THIS.

YOU DIDN'T COME ALL THIS WAY...FOR THIS.

RRRARGH!!

FATHER, NO!

ANA, STOP!

SLICE

PAPA... I...

NEVER APOLOGIZE...

GOOD GIRL.

IDIOT!! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!

HE-- I--

HE WAS GOING TO KILL...

I DID AS I WAS TAUGHT...

I'LL KILL *YOU*, YOU LITTLE WITCH!

SERGEI! LET ME SEE! LET ME HELP.

PLEASE...

SERGEI?

PAPA?

TAKE THAT, MRS. KRAVEN.

WHAT THE HELL IS SHE SMILING ABOUT?

YOU IGNORANT SOW!!

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO ME?!

YOU HAVE GIVEN ME THE *UNLIFE*...THE ETERNAL CURSE!

GAK!

I...I FOLLOWED YOUR *CAK* YOUR SPELLS...USED YOUR *WHEEZ* SERUMS...

I...I SACRIFICED THE SPIDER...

SNIFF

I KNOW THIS PRETENDER.

THIS IS NOT *THE SPIDER.* YOU HAVE BEEN DECEIVED.

TH-THAT'S NOT TRUE, HUSBAND! IT'S HIM! IT'S--

KAINE! THE SPIDER'S SORT-OF BROTHER.

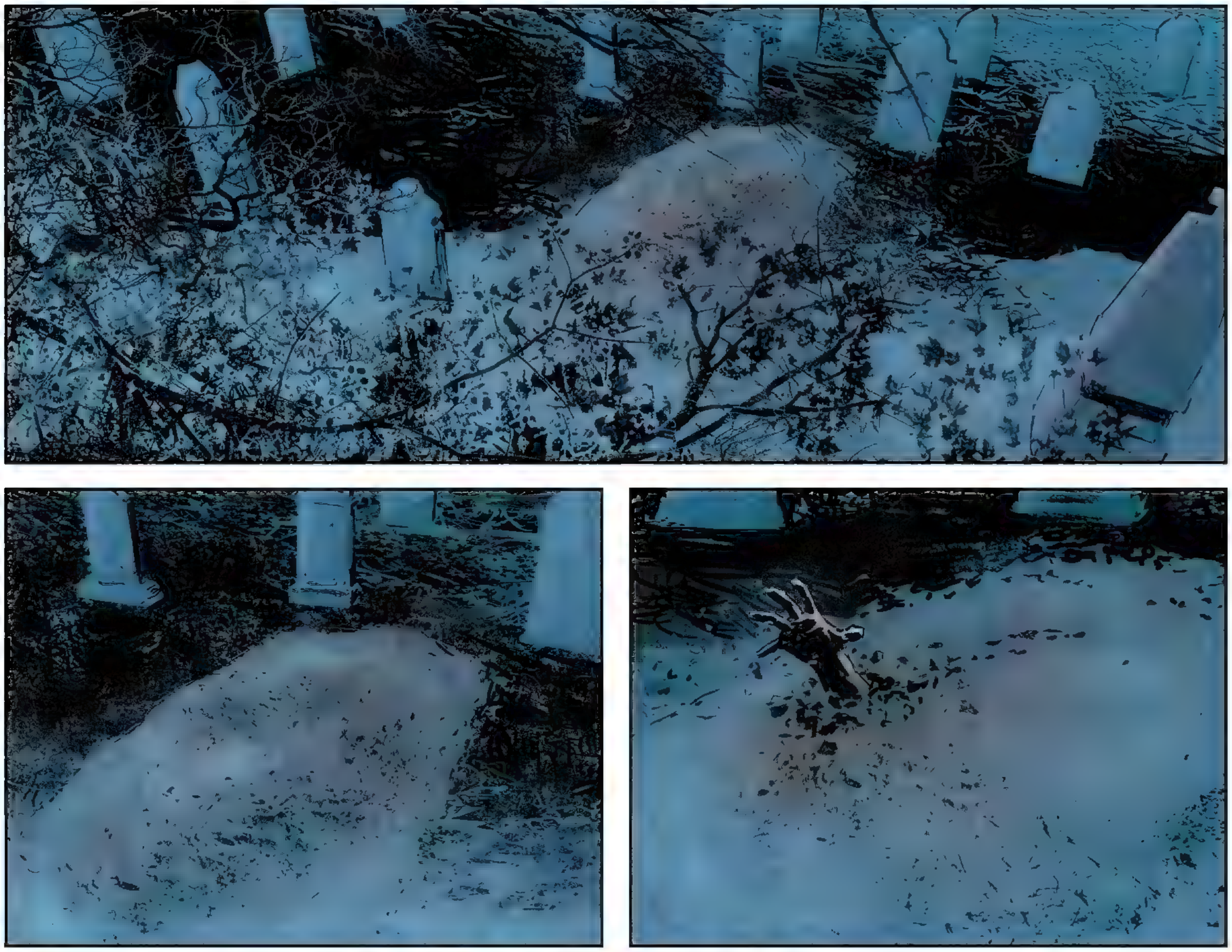
...HE WANTED TO DIE LIKE A REAL BOY.

SO THE CEREMONY WAS CORRUPTED.

SERGEI... PLEASE. I WILL FIX THIS.

NO...

...THIS IS NOT FOR *YOU* TO FIX.


GAH-HUNNNGH--

GAH-HLNNNGH--

OH GOD...

GOD... HELP ME...

NO...NOT GOD.

KAINE..?

NO...

...COMING... KRAVENS...WHAT ARE YOU--?

I'M DOIN' SOMETHING VERY VERY STUPID...

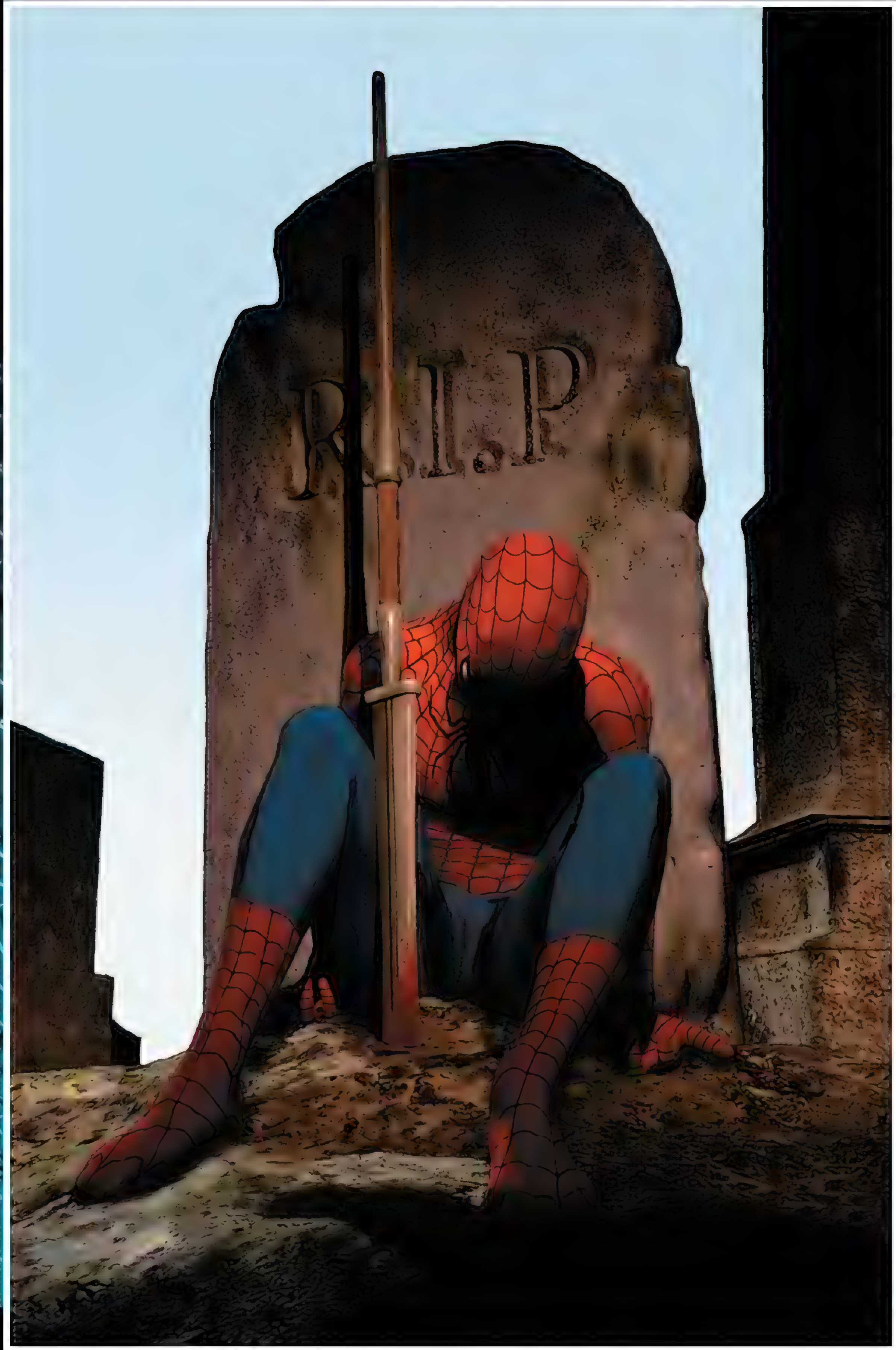
DON'T SCREW UP MY HERO MOMENT, PARKER.

KAINE!!

SMASH!

HUNT
ME

HUNT
ME
To Be Concluded!



AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #637

City Hall Press Room.

FELLOW NEW YORKERS, I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT EVERYTHING POSSIBLE IS BEING DONE TO IDENTIFY AND CONTAIN THE CURRENT CRISIS...

"AS HAS BEEN REPORTED, THE *ANIMALS* CURRENTLY ROAMING OUR STREETS ARE *NOT* ALL RESIDENTS OF THE CENTRAL PARK ZOO.

"AND WHILE THE NUMBER OF *RABID HOUSE PETS* IS GROWING, THE MAJORITY OF ANIMALS ARE COMING FROM... SOMEWHERE ELSE."

EXPERTS ARE BEING FLOWN IN, AND THIS OFFICE WOULD CONSIDER IT *EXTREMELY HELPFUL* IF THE *ANIMAL RIGHTS IDIOTS* WOULD BACK OFF AND LET THEM DO THEIR JOB.

"WE DON'T YET KNOW WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS, BUT I PROMISE YOU THAT ONCE THIS CRISIS HAS BEEN AVERTED, THEY *WILL* COME TO JUSTICE."

RESIDENTS ARE ADVISED TO STAY INDOORS AND LOCK THEIR HOUSE PETS IN THE BATHROOM--

HELLO? ARE YOU PEOPLE LISTENING TO ME? YOU LOOK LIKE A BUNCH OF SLACK-JAWED YOKELS! WE'VE DEALT WITH FAR WORSE--

UH... MAYOR JAMESON?

WHAT?

NYPD

THERE'S SOMETHING BEHIND ME, ISN'T THERE?

ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS A GREAT *HUNTER*.

HE HUNTED EVERYTHING ON THE EARTH, AND EVENTUALLY... HE LOST HIS *PURPOSE*.

SO HE WENT OUT OF HIS LEOPARD-SPOTTED MIND AND KILLED HIMSELF...

BUT NOT BEFORE HE TRIED TO *"BECOME"* THE ONE PREY HE COULD NOT DEFEAT...

NOT BEFORE HE SHOT ME AND BURIED ME IN THE GROUND...

NOT BEFORE HE ALMOST DESTROYED MY LIFE...

AND NOW HIS *FAMILY* HAS PICKED UP WHERE HE LEFT OFF...

ATTACKING *SPIDERS*...

MATTIE FRANKLIN...*KILLED*.

SMASHH

MADAME WEB...TORTURED.

YEAGH!

JULIA CARPENTER, ANYA CORAZON... MY "SISTERS"...

ALL ATTACKED...ALL TO GET AT ME...

AND FINALLY, KAINE. DEAD BECAUSE FOR ONCE IN HIS MISERABLE LIFE... HE DID SOMETHING NOBLE.

HE SACRIFICED HIMSELF SO I COULD LIVE...BUT IN THE PROCESS, HELPED TEAM PSYCHO BRING KRAVEN THE HUNTER BACK TO LIFE.

MY "SPIDER FAMILY..." BROKEN.

FOR ME. THIS WAS ALL FOR ME...

HUNT ME

WELL, YOU WANT ME, SASHA KRAVINOFF...?

I'M COMING...

I'M COMING FOR ALL OF YOU.

the GRIM HUNT
conclusion

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GALE, KELLY, SLOTT, VAN LENTE, WAID, WELLS web-heads
dedicated to J.M DEMATTEIS and MIKE ZECK

"UNDERSTAND...YOU WILL HEAR ME SAY THIS ONLY ONCE, FAMILY...

"*APOLOGIES* TO YOU FOR MY OUTBURST. WHILE YOU HAVE BEEN ANTICIPATING MY RETURN FOR MONTHS...

"...MY '*REBIRTH*' WAS SUDDEN, AND HAD ME MOMENTARILY... OFF-BALANCE.

"YOU HAVE GIVEN ME THE MOST PRECIOUS OF ALL GIFTS, MY DEAR *SASHA*. I PROMISE YOU *ALL* THAT I SHALL SQUEEZE EVERY OUNCE OF *POTENTIAL* FROM THIS LIFE...

"...WITH YOU, MY DEAR FAMILY... MY *TRIBE* BY MY SIDE.

"BUT BEFORE THAT NEW LIFE CAN BEGIN IN EARNEST...A LOOSE END REMAINS.

"THE *SPIDER MUST* BE DEALT WITH."

BUT I AM *CONFIDENT* THAT, WITH MY FAMILY... ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE.

I *NEED* YOU NOW, MORE THAN EVER.

YOU WILL RECEIVE YOUR INSTRUCTIONS SHORTLY.

THAT IS ALL.

"THAT IS ALL?" SERGEI--?

FATHER, WE HAVE SO MUCH TO TALK ABOUT!

DO NOT QUESTION HIM. HE HAS A PLAN.

TEND TO YOUR BROTHER. WATCH THOSE *SHREWS* IN THE HOLDING ROOM. ALL WILL BE REVEALED.

SERGEI...

...BELOVED HUSBAND...

IT IS SO GOOD TO HEAR YOUR VOICE. YOUR ***REAL*** VOICE, COMMANDING...

TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT, AND I WILL SERVE YOU.

I WANT YOU TO GET YOUR DAMN HANDS OFF OF ME BEFORE I CUT THEM OFF, SASHA.

...

I KNEW... I KNEW THE GREAT "*KRAVEN*" WOULD NEVER APOLOGIZE

WHY DO YOU HATE ME, SERGEI?

...

I HAVE GIVEN MY ORDERS. PREPARE FOR WAR.

ARE YOU MAD?! YOU CAN'T LEAVE *NOW!*

THE HELL I CAN'T. I PLAYED MY PART IN SASHA'S GAME AND *SHE* CHANGED THE RULES WHEN SHE KILLED THE WRONG SPIDER-MAN.

THIS ISN'T A *GAME!* WE ARE YOUR *FAMILY!*

MUST HAVE MISSED ALL OF THE CHRISTMAS CARDS, ALY.

SASHA PAID ME *THREE MILLION DOLLARS* TO TAKE PART IN THIS FARCE. *"FAMILY"* AIN'T FREE.

THEN *EARN YOUR KEEP!*

ALY, YOU'VE NEVER BEEN A *"DRINK THE KOOL-AID"* TYPE. *OPEN YOUR EYES...*

THUD

KRAVEN WAS *MAD* WHEN HE SHOT HIMSELF, AND HE DIDN'T COME BACK ANY BETTER--

THUNK

IF YOU WANT TO LIVE, YOU HAD BETTER LISTEN TO PAPA... AND PREPARE...

HE'S COMING. AND THE *SPYDER* IS SO VERY VERY ANGRY.

RRRRRRRRR

GET OUT OF MY FACE OR FREAKIN' KILL ME ALREADY!

HRR HRRR HRRRRRR

TAKE HEART, CHILD...IT WILL BE OVER SOON.

AND WHAT DOES THAT MEAN EXACTLY? AM I GOING TO DIE?

ALL THINGS DIE, CHILD--

DON'T START THAT YODA CRAP WITH HER, CASSANDRA, OR I'LL REACH OVER THERE AND KILL YOU MYSELF.

THE KID'S TERRIFIED.

SHE IS... BUT SHE IS ALSO SO MUCH MORE...

AFTER TONIGHT... EVERYTHING CHANGES--

DANGER HIGH VOLTAGE

YOU KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN!

SLAMM!

LET HER GO!

EVERYTHING IS WRONG! THAT MAN IS NOT MY HUSBAND--

OH, BUT HE IS...REFRESHED FROM A LONG NAP. IT'S LIKE THAT WITH OLD MARRIED COUPLES...SOMETIMES YOU FORGET.

WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO? HOW DO I SAVE MY FAMILY?

HA HA HA! YOU STUPID SOW. YOU BLINDED ME WITH YOUR DRUGS AND YOUR TORTURE AND YOUR PATHETIC CONNIVING TO "RECAPTURE" A GLORY THAT NEVER EXISTED!

YOU BROKE THE WEB OF LIFE AND NOW I SEE NOTHING!

THEN YOU ARE USELESS TO ME.

NNNGGH

NO!!

THANK YOUR GOD THAT I DON'T HAVE THE TIME TO GIVE YOU THE DEATH YOU DESERVE.

THE OTHER TWO ARE YOURS, VLADIMIR. DO AS YOU--

KADUNK

WHAT IS THAT?

IT'S... TERRIFYING... ISN'T IT? BLINDNESS..?

THIS...IS THE REAPING.

YOU HAVE MADE THE SPIDER VERY VERY ANGRY.

DON'T YOU PEOPLE HAVE BACK-UP GENERATORS? HOW COULD HE HAVE GOTTEN TO THE GENERATORS--?

FATHER! IS IT HIM--?

WHERE IS HE? FATHER!!

QUIET, IDIOT! USE YOUR SENSES. DON'T GIVE AWAY OUR POSITION.

MY "POSITION" IS GETTING THE HELL OUT OF HERE. WHO'S WITH ME--?

SPLIT

??

YOU HAVE YOUR WISH, COWARD.

YEAAAAAAAH!

FIGHT LIKE A MAN, YOU SON OF A--

BRAKOOM!

HAVEN'T YOU BEEN PAYING ATTENTION, ALY? HE ISN'T A MAN ANYMORE.

HE'S THE *SPYDER*. HE'S FATHER'S *GREATEST PREY*...AND NOW HE'S HUNTING *US*.

YOU HAD BETTER STAY CLOSE...

"HE'S GOING TO *THIN THE HERD* IF WE'RE NOT CAREFUL."

DANGER HIGH VOLTAGE

JULIA! ANYA!

CASSANDRA.

DAMN.

RRRRRRR

BRING IT, UGLY.

EVEN AS LIFE FLOWS FROM ME...
I FEEL HIM. HIS *RAGE*. HIS *POWER*...

...ALMOST *UNRECOGNIZABLE*
FROM THE PURE SOUL
I KNOW AS SPIDER-MAN.

KRAMMBLE

HGGGLCHH

THWIPPT

ALMOST...
UNRECOGNIZABLE...

GOD HELP US...

FLOOSH!

...HE...HE IS
THE *SPYDER*.

GCHHHHHH

HOUUUUUUUU!!

KRAKKT!

DEVOID OF MERCY...

...PAIN...

SLASHHHH

...HUMANITY.

KRAKKT!

HROOOOOO!

NO. NO...IT CAN'T BE LIKE THIS. HE CAN'T BECOME THIS...

MAWROOOOOO

KABLAM!

NNNGH

HE DODGED THE BULLET.

YOU MISSED--

NO. A BULLET MOVES AT 4000 FEET PER SECOND, AND I DON'T MISS.

HE DODGED IT...

HE'S NOT SUPPOSED TO BE THAT FAST.

ALY--

HRRG--!

ANA!

AAAAAAAGH!

WHAT HAVE WE DONE?

KRNCHHH

SKLTCHHH

MOTHER!

WEB...THREADS... UNRAVELLING...

HE CAN FIX IT... HE CAN FIX IT...

LET ME GO! LET ME HELP HER!

SHUT UP!!

SERGEI! WHAT'S HAPPENED?!

WHERE IS MY FAMILY?

LISTEN TO YOURSELF BLEAT. IS THAT HOW YOU LED THE "GREAT KRAVINOFFS" IN MY ABSENCE?

WHERE ARE THE BOYS, SERGEI?

LOST... DEAD? I DON'T KNOW.

"DON'T KNOW?" SERGEI, WHY ARE YOU SO COLD? I BROUGHT YOU HOME, SERGEI. I BROUGHT YOU BACK--

BROUGHT ME BACK...TO WHAT?

TO LIFE!

YOU CALL THIS LIFE!?

THIS PLACE IS HELL!

THWAK

BUT THE JOURNEY YOU HAVE MADE. THE SECRETS YOU MUST KNOW...

YOU WILL RESTORE THIS FAMILY TO GREATNESS--

MY FAMILY... SHOULD NOT HAVE FALLEN FROM GREATNESS WITHOUT ME.

THAT IS WHY I HATE YOU, SASHA. BECAUSE YOU WERE TOO WEAK TO PROTECT AND STRENGTHEN MY TRIBE.

I'LL SHOW YOU HOW WEAK--

TALKING TO YOURSELF IS THE FIRST SIGN OF INSANITY.

FOR YOU, MAYBE SIGN SEVENTY-TWO.

KRAKKOOM!

AAH!

OH MY GOD...

HOW- HOW DID YOU DO THAT? WHERE DID KRAVEN--?

YOU'D BE AMAZED WHAT *ANGER* DOES FOR A BODY, JULIA.

CASSANDRA NEEDS HELP--

TAKE CARE OF HER, PLEASE.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

I'M GOING TO KILL SASHA KRAVINOFF.

HE'S MAKING... A TERRIBLE MISTAKE.

S-SPIDEY..?

YOU MUST STOP HIM, AÑYA. SHOW HIM.

HUSH, CASSANDRA, LET ME TRY TO HELP--

YOU'RE A VERY BEAUTIFUL GIRL. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME SOMEONE TOLD YOU THAT?

I...I THOUGHT YOU WERE BLIND...

I WAS... I'M SORRY... THAT THERE ISN'T TIME FOR EXPLANATIONS...

AND FOR WHAT I'M GOING TO DO NEXT. MY FINAL SIN...FOR THE GOOD OF THE WEB.

CASSANDRA--? WHAT--?

SOMEONE HAS TO SEE. WITH *FRESH* EYES.

OH MY GOD.

SERGEI! SERGEI, WHAT'S HAPPENING?! HE'S HERE--*WHERE ARE YOU!?*

YOU. IT'S BEEN *YOU* ALL ALONG. PULLING THE *WEB* APART, THREAD BY THREAD.

WAS IT *WORTH IT?* DID YOU GET EVERYTHING YOU *WANTED?*

CONSIDERING EVERYTHING YOU'VE *TAKEN?*

AAAAAH!

BY THE WAY, MY *BROTHER* WANTED TO GIVE YOU THIS.

WAIT--!

SCARLET

AIIE!

W-WAIT--

DID YOU *"WAIT"* FOR MATTIE? CASSANDRA? *KAINE--?*

NOW YOU KNOW WHAT IT FEELS LIKE. TO BE *WOUNDED, HUNTED...*

...SLAUGHTERED.

OVER MY *DEAD BODY,* SPYDER.

YOUR CALL.

TAKE A BREATH, AND DUCK, TOUGH GUY!
NNGH!
ANYA, GET OUT OF HERE!
THOK
ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO KILL THAT LADY..?
...
THEN I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE.
LOYALTY. EVEN AMONG *MONGRELS*...
INSPIRATIONAL... BUT *MISGUIDED*, CHILD.
EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED HERE, YOUR PAIN AND SUFFERING, WAS AS I *COMMANDED* IT TO BE.
TO *HARDEN* YOU, SPIDER-MAN. TO FORGE YOU INTO SOMETHING *WORTHY* OF BATTLING *KRAVEN THE HUNTER.*
I CAME BACK FROM THE DEAD TO BAG THE *ULTIMATE PRIZE*...AND IT *FINALLY* STANDS BEFORE ME.
HAVE YOU *SUFFERED ENOUGH*, SPYDER?
OR DO I NEED TO KILL SOMEONE *CLOSER* TO YOU?

YOU'VE DONE ENOUGH!

HRRRRGH!

KSSSSSH

SHOW ME WHAT YOU'VE *LEARNED* FROM MY FAMILY.

NNGH

SKLITCH

SPIDER-MAN!

LET'S PLAY... LITTLE *SPIDER-GIRL*...

POISON, KRAVEN?

AFTER EVERYTHING I'VE BEEN THROUGH...

YOU THINK A KNIFE DIPPED IN POISON WILL STOP THIS?!

HRRAGH!!

LITTLE WITCH! YOU'VE RUINED IT! ALL OF YOU!

GLCHH--

THOK

KLUD

NNNNGH!

NO, THIS IS CALLED PAYBACK.

BTW, THE REST OF YOUR JERKHOLE FAMILY IS WATCHING YOU LOSE IT.

NO...

"THE *SPYDERS* HAVE BEEN HUNTING *US*."

S-SASHA... THEY'RE EVERYWHERE... EVERYWHERE...

NNNGH

IT'S TRUE...WE WERE *NEVER* HUNTING HIM...

IT'S NOT *POISON*.

IT'S MY *BLOOD*.

MY *PAIN*.

MY *SHAME*.

MY *RAGE*.

WE ARE *ONE*, SPYDER.

NOT ON YOUR LIFE...

OR THE *SECOND* ONE.

POPT!

YEAGGGH!

THAT WAS YOUR SHOULDER *TORN* FROM ITS SOCKET--

KRNCHHHHH

THAT WAS YOUR *STERNUM* SHATTERING.

I STUDIED ANATOMY TOO.

THIS IS *BRONX, PSYCHO!*

THAT'S A *REAL* JUNGLE, CHICA! SO DROP THE HUNTER ACT AND *LAY DOWN* BEFORE I--

NO...

THIS WILL SET THINGS RIGHT.

NO!!!

PLEASE DON'T...

<THANK YOU>

PAPA...

SPIDER-MAN...

SEE.

OF ALL WHO COULD HAVE BEEN, *YOU* ARE THE SPIDER-MAN. YOU ARE THE ONE WHO CAN CARRY *GREAT* POWER WITH GREATER RESPONSIBILITY...

"IT ISN'T FAIR. IT ISN'T ANYTHING YOU ASKED FOR...BUT THE TRUTH IS THAT YOU REPRESENT THE *MORAL FIBER* THAT RUNS THROUGH EVERYTHING.

"*THAT* IS YOUR *PURPOSE*... YOU ARE THE STRENGTH OF THE *THREAD* FROM WHICH THE WEB OF LIFE IS WOVEN.

"BUT HOW MANY *LIVES* HAVE BEEN RUINED BECAUSE OF THESE SICK--"

"BUT AS A *DESTROYER*...YOU WOULD BE *EQUALLY EFFECTIVE*. AND THE LIVES THAT YOU WOULD RUIN WITH ONE ACT--"

"PAIN IS INEVITABLE, PETER...*SUFFERING* IS OPTIONAL. YOU MUST CHOOSE A HIGHER PATH--

"THEY HAVE DONE TERRIBLE THINGS... BUT IF *YOU* FOLLOW SUIT AND KILL THIS MAN...

"YOU WILL NEVER FORGIVE YOURSELF.

"YOU WILL NEVER HEAL.

"YOU WILL BECOME SOMETHING UGLY AND TERRIBLE...

"AND THE *WEB* WILL BREAK FOREVER.

"SAVE *KRAVEN'S* LIFE, YOU SAVE YOUR *OWN*...AND THE *THOUSANDS* YOU WILL SAVE AFTER THAT...

AND THE MILLIONS *THEY* WILL SAVE AFTER THAT.

YOU ARE THE BEST OF US. THE CENTER *MUST HOLD.*

STRIKE! KILL ME!

SERGEI..?

IT HAS TO BE YOU! WE ARE BOUND! IF YOU DO NOT KILL ME--

--I CANNOT DIE!!

WHAT HAPPENED? WHAT DID SHE SHOW YOU?

I BROUGHT YOU *HOME*, SERGEI. I BROUGHT YOU BACK--

IT WAS *PERFECT*. IT WAS A *MASTERPIECE*.

YOU TOOK THAT MASTERPIECE *AWAY* FROM ME.

PLEASE..?

...

YOU PEOPLE ARE SCREWED UP.

YOU GOT A SECOND SHOT, KRAVEN. GO BE A DENTIST OR SOMETHING...

WE'RE DONE HERE.

NO!

GOOD. THAT...THAT WAS GOOD.

WHAT ABOUT THEM?

GOD, I HOPE SO. C'MON, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE I FORGET I'M NOT A *MONSTER*....

WE'LL TAKE THEM TO THE AVENGERS... OR THE A.S.P.C.A... WHATEVER. I JUST HAVE TO--

PWHOOOMP!

OOOOOKAY. SOME KIND OF FLASHPOTS.

THEY'RE GONE. I THINK.

DID WE WIN?

...

AND AS MYSTERIOUSLY AS IT BEGAN, THE WILD RAMPAGE THROUGH THE STREETS OF MANHATTAN CAME TO AN ABRUPT END LAST NIGHT.

BAFFLING ANIMAL EXPERTS AND CITY OFFICIALS ALIKE.

TIMES SQUARE BREWERY

THE LION KING

ANIMAL CONTROL

MAYOR JAMESON APPLAUDED HIS PERSONAL EFFORTS IN THE CRISIS, AND AFTER TREATMENT FOR THE MULTIPLE SPIDER-BITES HE RECEIVED DURING THE PRESS CONFERENCE NOTED--

"IT DOESN'T TAKE A REED RICHARDS TO SEE THAT SPIDER-MAN WAS PART OF THIS TERROR ATTACK ON THE CITY. HE WILL BE BROUGHT TO JUSTICE."

DMT

Potter's Field

YOU MAY NOT BELIEVE THIS FOR A LONG TIME...

IT BARELY MAKES SENSE TO ME...BUT THE SACRIFICE MADE THE *WEB* STRONGER.

KAINE PARKER

YOUR *UNWILLINGNESS* TO KILL KRAVEN...FOR ALL THAT THEY HAD DONE TO YOU... TO US...

THE *WEB* IS *SAFE. WHOLE.*

KAINE PARKER

ALL VARIATIONS ON A THEME, "WITH GREAT POWER COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY."

WHAT?

NOTHING, ANYA...

CASSANDRA WEBB
FRIEND

BY THE WAY, I LIKE THE NEW LOOK, BUT WATCH OUT, JULIA WILL CALL YOU A "BITER."

I *GAVE* IT TO HER, YOU IDIOT.

YEAH, I DON'T KNOW. SOMETHING... *CHANGED*. Y'KNOW?

AFTER THE PAST FEW WEEKS, A T-SHIRT AND CARGO SHORTS JUST DIDN'T FEEL *HEAVY* ENOUGH.

"PAIN IS INEVITABLE, SUFFERING IS OPTIONAL."

THE BAD'S GONNA COME, SPIDER-GIRL... JUST DON'T LET IT *DEFINE* YOU, OKAY?

THANKS, "DAD," I'LL WORK ON IT.

AND IF YOU DON'T MIND...I'M NOT GOING BY *SPIDER-GIRL.* IT'S TOTALLY CORNY AND MAKES YOU WANT TO PUKE.

NAME'S ARAÑA...AND IT'S GONNA *STAY* ARAÑA.

NO OFFENSE.

NONE TAKEN...SOUNDS PERFECT.

NOTHING'S "PERFECT..." LIFE THRIVES IN IMPERFECTIONS...

DON'T ASK ME WHAT IT MEANS. WHATEVER CASSANDRA DID TO ME...I'M A BLIND FORTUNE COOKIE WRITER--

JULIA, I'M--

DON'T APOLOGIZE. IT'S... *RIGHT.* IT WAS SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN. "*LIFE THRIVES ON IMPERFECTIONS.*"

OKAY...WHAT ABOUT THE MANSON-KRAVENS?

THE AVENGERS HAVE NADA.

GONE. BEYOND MY REACH, APPARENTLY... BUT THEY'LL BE BACK...

SOME OF THEM. BALANCE. BUT YOU'LL BE SEEING ME BEFORE THEN...

WHEN..?

THE NEXT TIME

I LIKED IT WHEN SHE WAS JUST *HOT.*

HOT AND MYSTERIOUS IS GONNA BE TROUBLE.

SO, WHAT *IS* NEXT?

NEXT?

JUST *LIFE*...LIFE IS NEXT.

THANKS, "DAD."

SHUT IT, SPIDER-GIRL.

Elsewhere...

PRETTY MUCH AS FAR "ELSEWHERE" AS ONE CAN GO...

THIS IS MADNESS! THEY WERE RIGHT ABOUT YOU! INSANE! COWARD!

I BROUGHT YOU BACK TO SAVE US--

THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I AM DOING, DARLING.

YOU ARE GETTING YOUR WISH. THE KRAVINOFF FAMILY WILL AGAIN BE RESTORED TO GREATNESS...

IN THE SAVAGE LAND, A NEW FAMILY WILL BE BORN.

I...I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

YOU MADE A *MOCKERY* OF MY LIFE, SASHA. A MOCKERY OF MY FAMILY...AND IF THE KRAVENS ARE TO SURVIVE, THEY MUST BE *HARDENED*...

YOU WILL BE *HUNTED*.

AND IF YOU ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO SURVIVE THIS LAND THEN, *MAYBE* YOU WILL BE WORTHY TO BE *KRAVINOFF*.

HOW DARE YOU?! I AM "KRAVINOFF" NOW!

THIS IS MY FAMILY! NOT YOURS!

KRAKKT

HNKF!

WHAT THE--?

ROARRRRR!

RAAAAARGH!

I'M SORRY, VLADIMIR...YOU DID NOT DESERVE THIS.

THUNKTT

FATHER NO!

RESPECT, ALYOSHA... RESPECT FOR THE DEAD.

BLAMM!

YOU WANT TO PLAY GAMES, PLAY THEM YOURSELF YOU SICK &@%#!

I'M OUT OF HERE!

YOU ARE NOT AFRAID.

OF COURSE NOT. I AM KRAVINOFF.

I HAVE WAITED FOR A LONG TIME, FATHER. I WANT TO LEARN. IF YOU DEEM ME UNWORTHY, STRIKE.

YOU OR YOUR BROTHER.

WHOMEVER RETURNS ALIVE WILL HELP ME BUILD A NEW FAMILY. IT'S FAIR.

YOU SEE? I *TOLD* YOU YOU WOULD FIND SOMETHING TO LIVE FOR...

NOW THE WORK BEGINS.

SMEK

YES...NOW THE WORK BEGINS.

OH ALYYYYYY... COME BACK! I JUST WANT TO TALK!

WE'RE *FAMILY!*

The End

Grim Hunt Epilogue.

AND SOMEWHERE ELSE...WHERE THE MOST TATTERED THREADS OF THE WEB ARE LEFT TO ROT...

A REMINDER...THAT *NOTHING TRULY* DIES ON THIS EARTH...SO LONG AS THERE IS *BALANCE*.

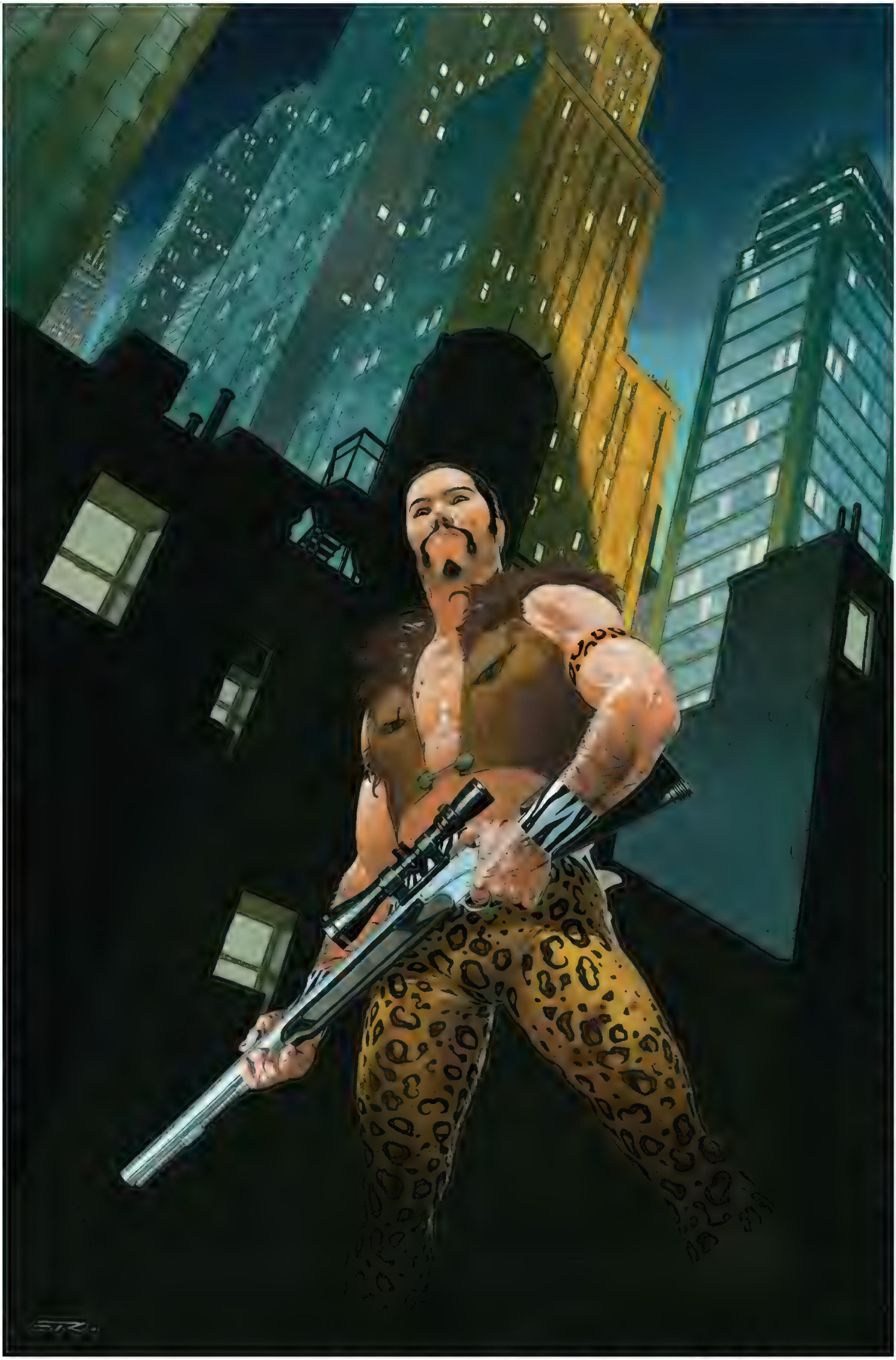
KAINE PARKER

ONE *HUNTER CHEATS DEATH* AND NOW WALKS THE EARTH...

SO ANOTHER MUST *RISE* TO MEET HIM.

RISE, *CURSED ONE*, THE THREAD OF YOUR WEB HAS NOT YET BEEN CUT...

RISE...TARANTULA.



AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #636 VARIANT
BY ESAD RIBIC

Many Years Ago.

I DETEST CITIES.

THEY'RE CRUEL. COLD. HUNGRY.

THEY CUT MEN OPEN, BLEED THEM TILL THERE'S NOTHING LEFT....

...THEN *DEVOUR* THEM.

MILLIONS OF PEOPLE TRAPPED IN CONCRETE CAGES. LIVING, BREEDING, SUFFERING, DYING...

SHRIKK

YARRR--!

...AND FOR *WHAT?*

BAM BAM BAM

SOME STRIVE FOR GOALS THAT WILL ALWAYS REMAIN OUT OF REACH, OTHERS ATTAIN A MEASURE OF WEALTH OR FAME OR POWER; BUT, IN THE END...

...THEY ALL DIE ALONE...

...AND *AFRAID.*

I TURNED MY BACK ON THE CITIES, ON THIS LUNACY CALLED CIVILIZATION, YEARS AGO.

I FOUND MY PEACE, MY DIGNITY, IN THE JUNGLE.

MY NAME IS SERGEI KRAVINOFF. BUT YOU--

--MAY CALL ME *KRAVEN.*

AND IN THE *HUNT.*

AN UNTOLD TALE OF KRAVEN THE HUNTER

HUNTING THE HUNTER

PART ONE: ADRIFT

J.M. DEMATTEIS	MAX FIUMARA	VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA	FABIO D'AURIA	TOM BRENNAN	STEPHEN WACKER	TOM BREVOORT	JOE QUESADA	DAN BUCKLEY	ALAN FINE
WRITER	ARTIST	LETTERER	COLORIST	ASST. EDITOR	EDITOR	EXEC. EDITOR	EDITOR IN CHIEF	PUBLISHER	EXEC. PRODUCER

GALE, GUGGENHEIM, KELLY, SLOTT, VAN LENTE, WAID & WELLS WEB-HEADS

Y-YOU TAKE ANOTHER FREAKIN' *STEP*, MAN... AN' I SWEAR I'LL BLOW YOUR *HEAD* OFF! I *SWEAR* I'LL--

BUT WHAT *GOOD* IS THE HUNT...

SKRAWW

GET UP!

...WHEN YOUR PREY HAS NO *FIRE* IN HIS BELLY?

A MAN LIKE THIS KILLS WITHOUT COMPUNCTION. TO HIM, A HUMAN LIFE POSSESSES NO VALUE. NO MEANING.

I...I *KNOW* WHO YOU ARE. I *KNOW!*

LOOK AT ME, *PAULIE RIZZO.*

LOOK AT ME!

PLEASE... PLEASE *DON'T...*

AND YET HIS OWN DEATH TERRIFIES HIM. THE STINK OF FEAR OOZES OUT OF HIS EVERY PORE. HOW DISAPPOINTING. HOW...

A CORNERED LION DOESN'T WHIMPER, PAULIE.

HE DOESN'T BEG FOR MERCY.

KRA-KOOOM!

HE FIGHTS! WITH EVERY OUNCE OF STRENGTH...EVERY LAST BREATH--

HE FIGHTS!

...P-P-PLEASE...

WUD

KRA-KOOOM!!

COME, DUNYA--

...PATHETIC.

BUT *I'VE* BECOME SOMETHING EVEN *MORE* PATHETIC: A HUNTER--WITH NO STOMACH FOR THE HUNT. A MAN OF HONOR...

...WHO KILLS FOR MONEY.

YOU WANNA RUN THAT BY ME *AGAIN*, KRAVINOV?

HAVE I LIVED SO VERY *LONG*...

...ONLY TO FALL SO VERY *FAR*?

I'VE RETURNED YOUR PAYMENT...AND *MORE*. WHAT ELSE IS THERE TO *SAY*?

AND I CHOSE *NOT* TO DO IT.

YOU CAN TELL ME WHY YOU LET THAT SCUM RIZZO GET AWAY. I GAVE YOU A *JOB* TO DO, KRAVINOV, AND--

WHY?

BECAUSE PAUL RIZZO WASN'T *WORTHY*-- OF MY TIME OR MY TALENT. AND FRANKLY, *MR. DENTON*--

--YOU'RE NOT, EITHER.

SWAKK

YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF DAMN *NERVE* TALKIN' TO ME LIKE THAT!

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHO YOU'RE DEALING WITH?!

SKKRAFT

AAAAA—!!

RUKKK

...AKKK...!

TUK

TUK

TUK

BLAM BLAM BLAM

SHRIPPPPP

SPAKKK!

SHUK

K-RAKK!

DO YOU?

I DETEST CITIES.

AND YET I RETURN TO THEM--AGAIN AND AGAIN. *WHY?* AM I DRAWN BY THE MEMORY OF *ST. PETERSBURG*...

...THAT PARADISE WHERE I SPENT A BLESSED CHILDHOOD--THAT NOW SEEMS MORE LIKE A DREAM FROM ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER WORLD?

MY FATHER, THE GRAND DUKE, WAS REVERED AND RESPECTED BY *CZAR NICHOLAS* HIMSELF. MY MOTHER, THE GRAND DUCHESS, A MUCH-ADMIRED WOMAN OF WISDOM, GRACE...

...AND, ABOVE ALL, HEART.

BUT HER HEART WAS BROKEN WHEN THE CZAR FELL... AND CIVILIZATION FELL *WITH* HIM.

WE FLED TO AMERICA. WE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE FLED TO HELL.

IS IT ANY WONDER, THEN, THAT I RETREATED TO THE SO-CALLED PRIMITIVE WORLD--WHERE LIFE WAS MORE HONEST. MORE HONORABLE.

SO *AGAIN* I ASK:

WHY AM I HERE?

...YOU'RE AN ANIMAL, SERGEI--YOU *KNOW* THAT?

I'LL TAKE THAT AS A *COMPLIMENT*.

THAT'S EXACTLY HOW I *MEANT* IT.

READY FOR ANOTHER *GO-ROUND*, BIG MAN?

THIS IS *CHICAGO*, NOT SAINT PETERSBURG. AND I'M NOT A GRAND DUKE...

READY, WILLING AND ABLE! BUT *FIRST*. MY DARLINGS--

MORE *VODKA!*

...I'M AN EMBARRASSMENT.

A DISGRACE.

SHRAKKKKK

OUT!

BOTH OF YOU--

--GET OUT!

SKAAAASH

GET OUT.

MY LIFE FEELS AS EMPTY-- AS DEVOID OF PURPOSE--AS THE ANTS OUT THERE WHO CRAWL THROUGH THESE CITY STREETS, PRETENDING TO BE MEN.

I'M LOST. UTTERLY ADRIFT.

PERHAPS THE TIME HAS FINALLY COME TO PUT A RIFLE IN MY MOUTH AND...

THERE'S NO JOY IN THE HUNT ANY MORE. NO RELEASE IN SENSUAL INDULGENCE. THE JUNGLE HOLDS NO CHALLENGE. MEMORY HOLDS NO COMFORT.

...PULL THE TRIGGER.

...HE DISRESPECTED ME IN A WAY *NOBODY* EVER HAS.

AND I WANT HIM TO *PAY*--YOU *UNDERSTAND* ME?

I WANT THAT BASTARD KRAVINOV TO PAY.

NO WORRIES, MR. DENTON.

KAINE UNDERSTANDS *COMPLETELY*.

Next: His Brother's Keeper

EVERY NIGHT I GO TO BED ASKING *GOD* TO *TAKE* ME--

--AND EVERY MORNING I WAKE UP *THANKING* HIM FOR THE CHANCE TO SEE *ANOTHER DAY.*

I LET THE OLD LADY RAMBLE. I DON'T KNOW WHY.

GUESS IT'S THE PRICE I PAY FOR DIRT-CHEAP RENT AND FREE MEALS.

HELL OF A WAY TO LIVE, *MRS. O.*

WHAT OTHER CHOICE DO I *HAVE?*

MY HUSBAND DIED TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, *KAINE.* I THOUGHT FOR SURE I WOULDN'T MAKE IT *SIX MONTHS* WITHOUT HIM. YET HERE I *AM.*

SO I TRY TO MAKE THE *BEST* OF IT.

THE *BEST* OF IT?

LIVING IN A RAT-HOLE. NO FRIENDS IN THE WORLD. SO LONELY SHE WASTES HER TIME--AND *MINE*--ON THESE USELESS CONVERSATIONS.

IF THIS IS "*THE BEST OF IT*," I'D HATE TO SEE THE *WORST.*

GOTTA GO, MRS. O.

SO *SOON?*

GOT AN *APPOINTMENT.*

A JOB?

MAYBE.

WILL YOU STOP IN AND SEE ME WHEN YOU GET *HOME?*

MIGHT BE PRETTY *LATE.*

THAT'S *OKAY.*

I HARDLY SLEEP AT *ALL* THESE DAYS.

NEITHER DO I.

HATED LYING TO THE OLD LADY, BUT I HAD TO GET OUT OF THERE BEFORE ALL HER YAMMERING MADE MY *HEAD* EXPLODE.

ANYWAY, I WASN'T REALLY LYING: I *DO* HAVE AN APPOINTMENT. JUST SO HAPPENS IT'S WITH A WHISKEY BOTTLE.

AND I DO HAVE A *JOB* LINED UP. MAYBE. IF I DECIDE TO TAKE *DENTON'S* OFFER. AND I GUESS I SHOULD.

BEEN HERE IN CHICAGO FOR ALMOST THREE MONTHS NOW. THAT'S A LIFETIME FOR ME.

THE *ROAD'S* WHERE I BELONG--BUT I'M RUNNING OUT OF MONEY. AND MONEY'S ONE THING DENTON HAS. IN SPADES.

BUT TO GET MY HANDS ON THAT CASH, I'VE GOT TO GO AFTER *KRAVINOFF*

"KRAVEN, THE HUNTER" HE CALLS HIMSELF. MORONIC NAME.

BUT I GUESS HE'S NO DIFFERENT FROM ALL THE REST OF THOSE RIDICULOUS, COSTUMED EGOTISTS: *FANTASTIC FOUR, DOCTOR OCTOPUS, DAREDEVIL, MAGNETO--*

SPIDER-MAN.

DO I REALLY NEED TO GET INVOLVED WITH ONE OF *HIS* OLD ENEMIES? *PARKER* MAY LIKE MIXING IT UP WITH A MENTAL CASE WHO HAS A TARZAN FIXATION, BUT ME...

...I LIVE IN THE *REAL WORLD*

WELL, AS REAL AS IT CAN BE FOR A GUY WHO WAS BORN IN A TEST TUBE. AN *IMPERFECT CLONE*...

HEY...HEY, BEAUTIFUL--

...CREATED FROM PARKER'S *DNA*

SO I THINK I'LL PASS ON DENTON'S OFFER. PLENTY OF OTHER WAYS FOR A MAN LIKE ME TO MAKE MONEY...

MIND IF I SHOW YOU HOW IT'S *DONE?*

FEEL *FREE.*

IN A TOWN LIKE THIS

"MERCHANDISE"? THIS GUY *OWN* YOU, BEAUTIFUL?

GET YOUR HANDS OFF THE *MERCHANDISE.*

LIKE *HELL* HE DOES!

THEN, WITH ALL *DUE RESPECT,* JACK--GO *SCREW* YOURSELF.

YOU DON'T LIKE *LIVIN'* VERY MUCH, DO YOU?

ACTUALLY... I *HATE* IT.

IN FACT, IF YOU *KILLED* ME...YOU'D BE DOING ME A *FAVOR.* BUT LET ME BE CLEAR ABOUT *ONE THING:*

I'M NOT GOING DOWN WITHOUT A FIGHT.

THE MAN WHO TAKES *ME* OUT--

KAAAASSHH

--HAS GOT TO *EARN* IT.

HOLY CRAP.

AYYEEEE--!

NOW WHERE *WERE* WE? OH, YEAH--

--I WAS GOING TO *TEACH* YOU SOME THINGS...

OUT OF MY *BAR--*

--NOW!

HEY, LISTEN--I DIDN'T COME IN HERE FOR TROUBLE...I JUST CAME TO DRINK.

SO HOW ABOUT I GO BACK TO MY TABLE, FINISH OFF THE LAST BOTTLE AND--

I SAID GET THE HELL OUT.

SORRY TO DISAPPOINT YOU...BUT I'M NOT GOING--

--ANYWHERE...

NO. NOT NOW.

NOT

ARRRRRRR---!!

...NOW!

MIND SPLITS OPEN...A DOOR OPENS WITH IT...

...AND I SEE.

AN UNTOLD TALE OF KRAVEN THE HUNTER

HUNTING THE HUNTER

PART TWO: A PROPHECY

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GALE, KELLY, SLOTT, VAN LENTE, WAID & WELLS WEB-HEADS

I

SEE

KRAAAK

WHAT I HAVE TO DO, WHERE I HAVE TO GO

HELLUVA THING, THESE *PRE-COG VISIONS*. NEVER REALLY SURE IF WHAT THEY SHOW ME IS ACCURATE.

THANKS FER THE *SHOW*, PAL!

BUT THIS ONE...

...DIDN'T LEAVE A LOT OF ROOM FOR *AMBIGUITY*

MRS. O...?

SO I CALL DENTON, TELL HIM I'M IN--THEN HEAD BACK TO THE HOUSE TO GRAB WHAT FEW POSSESSIONS I HAVE.

...AND LET MRS. O'BRIEN KNOW I'M LEAVING

MRS. O... ARE YOU--?

NOT SURE WHY I EVEN BOTHER. SHE'S AN ANNOYING, HALF-CRAZY OLD BAT BUT SHE'S SHOWN ME *KINDNESS*

AND THAT'S A DAMN PRECIOUS COMMODITY.

...IN THIS WRETCHED WORLD

HA-HA-HA-HA!!

WELL, MRS. O...

...GUESS YOUR GOD FINALLY GAVE YOU WHAT YOU WANTED...

AND MAYBE...

...HE'LL DO THE SAME FOR *ME*.

OR AT LEAST-- *KRAVINOFF* WILL.

IS THE PROPHECY *TRUE*, HUNTER? ARE YOU THE ONE WHO'LL FINALLY PUT ME OUT OF MY MISERY?

HE'S AN INTERESTING CASE, I'LL GIVE HIM THAT. CLAIMS TO BE THE DESCENDANT OF RUSSIAN *ROYALTY*...AND HE LIVES LIKE IT, TOO.

HOUSES ALL OVER THE WORLD. WOMEN IN EVERY CITY. A FORTUNE THAT NEVER SEEMS TO RUN OUT.

BUT UNDER THE SKIN, THERE'S *PAIN*. AND IT RUNS *DEEP*. HE TRIES TO HIDE IT BENEATH FANCY SUITS AND PROUD TALK. BUT HE'S AN *ANIMAL*, OUR SERGEI IS:

WOUNDED AND ANGRY.

GUESS THAT'S WHY HE MADE A NAME FOR HIMSELF AS A BIG GAME HUNTER. HE NEEDED SOMEPLACE TO FOCUS HIS RAGE. NOTHING LIKE SLAUGHTERING INNOCENT CREATURES TO MAKE A MAN FEEL *BETTER* ABOUT HIMSELF.

SSKAAASH!

LET'S FIND OUT

NO JUDGMENT, KRAVEN.

I'VE BEEN THERE *MYSELF*

SO THE WEEKS PASS AND I TRACK HIM HERE UPSTATE NEW YORK. A TWO-HUNDRED-ACRE ESTATE

A MANSION THAT'S MORE LIKE A *CZAR'S FORTRESS* BUT WHERE

...ARE THE *GUARDS?*

CLICK

GOOD EVENING, KAINE.

MY NAME IS *MR. MWANGA.* I AM SERGEI KRAVINOFF'S *PERSONAL ASSISTANT.*

"PERSONAL ASSISTANT"? IS *THAT* WHAT THEY'RE CALLING IT NOW?

I RESENT YOUR *TONE*... AND YOUR *INFERENCE.*

LOOK, YOU WANT TO CARRY JUNGLE JIM'S WATER, THAT'S *YOUR* BUSINESS. BUT I THOUGHT THOSE DAYS WERE *LONG GONE.*

MR. MWANGA IS MY *DEAREST* FRIEND...AND *CLOSEST* CONFIDANT.

I'VE KNOWN HIM SINCE HE WAS AN ORPHAN...FOUR YEARS OLD...BEGGING ON THE STREETS OF NAIROBI. WITH MY ASSISTANCE, MWANGA WENT ON TO STUDY LITERATURE AT OXFORD.

HE'S WRITTEN THREE BOOKS ON *WILLIAM BLAKE*--

--INCLUDING A BIOGRAPHY THAT MOST SCHOLARS CONSIDER *DEFINITIVE*.

AN *EDUCATED* SLAVE--IS STILL A *SLAVE*.

YOU *MISUNDERSTAND* ME, KAINE. JUST AS YOU CLEARLY UNDERESTIMATE ME.

DID YOU REALLY THINK I WOULDN'T KNOW YOU WERE *STALKING* ME? DID YOU REALLY THINK--

--YOU COULD *HUNT* THE *HUNTER?*

I *FIGURED* YOU WERE ON TO ME.

BUT *STILL* YOU CAME. MR. DENTON MUST BE PAYING YOU QUITE *WELL*.

YOU SHOULD *KNOW*. AFTER ALL--HE HIRED *YOU* FIRST. AND IS HE EVER *PISSED OFF*.

HAVE A *DRINK*, KAINE--

--AND *LET'S TALK*.

I'M HERE TO *KILL* YOU. WHAT ELSE IS THERE TO *SAY?*

AND WHAT IF I GAVE YOU *DOUBLE* WHAT DENTON IS PAYING YOU? WOULD YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ABOUT *THAT?*

I'D ASK *WHY*--

BECAUSE SERGEI KRAVINOFF DOESN'T EMBRACE *VIOLENCE* AS AN END IN *ITSELF*--

--AND I SUSPECT *YOU* DON'T, EITHER.

SO WHY DANCE LIKE A PUPPET...ON STRINGS CONTROLLED BY *LESSER* MEN? TAKE THE MONEY AND GO.

AND IF I *DON'T...?*

I WILL MOST *CERTAINLY* KILL YOU. AN OUTCOME I'M HOPING TO *AVOID*.

SKRAWWW

I'VE *STUDIED* YOU, KAINE--AS YOU HAVE CLEARLY STUDIED *ME*. YOUR *ORIGINS* ARE SHROUDED IN MYSTERY. BUT YOUR *SOUL*... YOUR SOUL MIRRORS MY *OWN*.

ONE COULD ALMOST SAY THAT WE'RE--

--BROTHERS...!

ONE SECOND--AND THE CONFIDENCE BLEEDS FROM HIS VOICE. THE COLOR DRAINS FROM HIS CHEEKS. IT'S AS IF HE'S *SEEING* SOMETHING IN ME.

...THAT HE DIDN'T SEE *BEFORE*

YOU THINK WE'RE BROTHERS, KRAVEN? SORRY. I ALREADY HAVE TWO-- AND I'M PRETTY SURE YOU'D HATE BOTH OF THEM.

GOD KNOWS I DO.

BUT... *WHAT?*

AS FOR MY *SOUL*--

I DON'T *HAVE* ONE.

DOESN'T MATTER. HE'S RATTLED NOW. AFRAID.

I'M JUST A RANDOM MASS OF CELLS AND ORGANS, BLOOD AND MUSCLES. *SPITE AND LOATHING.*

AND I'M GOING TO USE THAT FEAR *AGAINST* HIM. TAKE THE GREAT HUNTER DOWN...

OH...AND ONE *OTHER* THING: *YOU* MAY NOT EMBRACE VIOLENCE AS AN END IN ITSELF--

--BUT I *DO*. SO YOU CAN *KEEP* YOUR MONEY...AND PUT IT TOWARD A NICE FUNER--

SHRIPPP

...BEFORE HE EVEN *REALIZES IT.*

Next: WAR!

AN UNTOLD TALE OF KRAVEN THE HUNTER

HUNTING THE HUNTER

PART THREE: WAR

DIDN'T SEE *THAT* COMING *KRAVEN* MOVED SO FAST... MORE LIKE AN ANIMAL THAN A MAN...WHIPPED OUT THAT DAMN *KNIFE* AND NOW--

NOW I'M AS GOOD AS *DEAD*

SHOULDN'T BE SURPRISED. THAT'S WHAT I SAW IN MY *VISION*: THE HUNTER...

...STANDING OVER MY *BLOODY CORPSE*

J.M. DEMATTEIS	EMMA RIOS with MAX FIUMARA	FABIO D'AURIA	VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA	TOM BRENNAN	STEPHEN WACKER	TOM BREVOORT	JOE QUESADA	DAN BUCKLEY	ALAN FINE
WRITER	ARTISTS	COLORIST	LETTERER	ASST. EDITOR	EDITOR	EXEC. EDITOR	EDITOR IN CHIEF	PUBLISHER	EXEC. PRODUCER

GALE, KELLY, SLOTT, VAN LENTE, WAID & WELLS WEB-HEADS

CALL *DAMU* AND *DUMISA*. HAVE THEM GIVE THIS... *KAINE* A PROPER BURIAL.

YOU LOOK DISAPPOINTED, *SERGEI*.

IN A WAY, I *AM*. FOR A MOMENT THERE, I THOUGHT HE WAS--

WAS *WHAT*?

SOMETHING... *MORE*.

AFTER A LIFE AS HOLLOW...AS *WRETCHED*...AS MINE, THERE'S NO REASON TO *RESIST* DEATH...

I *WELCOME* IT--WITH *OPEN ARMS*...

BUT IF SERGEI KRAVINOFF REALLY *IS* THE MAN WHO'S GOING TO TAKE ME OUT OF THIS WORLD...

...HE'S GOING TO HAVE TO *PROVE* IT

EARN IT

SSSSSSSSSSSS

BEING A *DEFECTIVE CLONE* HAS ITS UPSIDE. LIKE A TOUCH THAT CAN *BURN* FLESH

OR *CAUTERIZE* WOUNDS

KRAAK!

RUNCH!

HURTS LIKE HELL BUT NOT *HALF* AS MUCH.

...AS IT HURTS *THEM*

ALL RIGHT, *JUNGLE JIM*-- IT'S TIME FOR THE TWO OF US TO--

SSSSSSSSSS

WHERE'D HE *GO*?

IT'S NOT WHERE *HE* WENT THAT MATTERS. IT'S WHERE *YOU* GO FROM HERE.

WHAT'RE YOU *TALKING* ABOUT?

I ASKED YOU EARLIER TO *LEAVE* HERE. THAT IS STILL THE *WISEST* COURSE.

I CAN *FEEL* IT...TO THE BOTTOM OF MY SOUL: THIS WILL *NOT* END WELL.

FOR YOUR *OWN* SAKE, KAINE...AND *HIS*... I *IMPLORE* YOU TO--

...BUT I KNOW IT'S THE *HUNTER* CALLING ME OUT

AAARRRRRROOOO--!

SOUNDS LIKE SOME KIND OF ANIMAL

RRRRRROOOOO--!

...TO FACE THE TANTALIZING POSSIBILITY

DON'T GO.

...OF MY OWN *EXTINCTION*

HOW CAN I NOT?

AT FIRST I THOUGHT MWANGA WAS SOME PATHETIC *THROWBACK* TO THE DAYS OF THE "GREAT WHITE HUNTERS" AND THEIR LOYAL SPEAR-CARRIERS. BUT THERE'S MORE *TO* HIM THAN THAT.

HE'S A MAN OF *INTEGRITY*-- NOT SOMETHING I COME ACROSS VERY OFTEN. AND HIS FRIENDSHIP WITH KRAVINOFF...

...SEEMS *GENUINE*.

THEY RESPECT EACH OTHER, *CARE* ABOUT EACH OTHER. SHARE A SIMPLE, HUMAN CONNECTION...

...THAT I'VE *NEVER* KNOWN.

KAINE!

WHAT THE *HELL*?!

DO YOU *FEEL* IT, KAINE? THE JUNGLE... LIKE A FEVER... *INSIDE* YOU?

HOW'D HE *DO* THAT? GET *MY NAME* ON THAT *TOMBSTONE*?

THE *DRUMS* POUNDING... THE WARRIORS *CHANTING*?

WHEN I ARRIVED HERE, KRAVEN SAID HE KNEW I WAS *TRACKING* HIM. THAT HE'D BEEN *WAITING* FOR ME.

THERE WAS SOMETHING ON THE *TIP* OF THAT KNIFE... AN ANCIENT MIXTURE OF CERTAIN HERBS AND ROOTS.

MAYBE HE KNEW ABOUT THE *VISION*, TOO. MAYBE...HE REALLY *IS* THE ONE.

AND NOW THEY'RE *SWIMMING* THROUGH YOUR BLOODSTREAM... *FEEDING* ON YOUR BRAIN.

OR MAYBE--THAT POTION OF HIS IS JUST SCREWING WITH MY *HEAD*--AND THE INSCRIPTION ON THAT TOMBSTONE...

HERE LIES KAINE SLAIN BY THE HUNTER

ISN'T EVEN THERE

NOT ENOUGH TO *CUT MY THROAT*--HUH, KRAVINOFF? YOU HAD T'*DRUG* ME, TOO?

MIGHT WORK ON A *NORMAL* MAN. BUT IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED--

--I'M ANYTHING *BUT* NORMAL. AND CONSIDERING I WAS HATCHED IN A *TEST TUBE*... BORN FROM THE DNA OF A WALL-CRAWLING FREAK--

--IT'S A PRETTY *BIG STRETCH*--

ROWWWRRR

WHUMMP!

ROWWWRRR!

SHRRIPPP

SNAKT!

WHUDD!

RAKKKK

SHRRIPPP

--TO EVEN CALL ME A *MAN.*

YOU SAID BEFORE THAT YOU THOUGHT I WAS... *SOMETHING MORE.* TRUTH IS, I'VE ALWAYS THOUGHT OF MYSELF AS *SOMETHING LESS.*

BUT... *TONIGHT--*

--MAYBE YOU'LL BE PROVED *RIGHT.*

I CAN FEEL KRAVEN'S POTION *BURNING* THROUGH MY BODY. HE THOUGHT IT WOULD CONFUSE ME. *WEAKEN* ME.

BUT I'VE BEEN BURNING MY *WHOLE LIFE.*

EVER SINCE I CRAWLED UP OUT OF *PROFESSOR WARREN'S* VATS, MY CELLS HAVE BEEN DYING SLOWLY. *PAINFULLY.*

MY *EVERY BREATH* HAS BEEN *AGONY.*

SO WHAT'S A LITTLE *MORE?*

STILL, FOR ALL THE SUFFERING I'VE ENDURED, I NEVER HAD THE *COURAGE* TO TAKE MYSELF OUT.

OR MAYBE THERE'S A PART OF ME THAT'S JUST TOO DAMN STUBBORN-- TOO DAMN *STUPID*-- TO *GIVE UP*

EITHER WAY, KRAVINOFF, I'M HOPING YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO PUT ME OUT OF MY *MISERY.* BUT HERE'S THE *THING:*

BEFORE YOU *DO...*

...I'M GOING TO FEED YOU SOME MISERY OF YOUR *OWN*

LOOK AT HIM ON HIS KNEES-- *WEEPING* LIKE A LITTLE GIRL

PROUD RUSSIAN NOBLEMAN?

GREAT WHITE HUNTER?

SERGEI KRAVINOFF'S A *PATHETIC JOKE*. HE'S...

HE'S OUT OF HIS FREAKING MIND.

I DRINK MWANGA'S BLOOD...AND, WITH IT, HIS ESSENCE, HIS *WISDOM*. AND I SEE NOW, I *KNOW* NOW...

...WHO IT IS I FACE.

LET'S DO THIS.

HOW CALM I FEEL; HOW *PEACEFUL.*

AS IF SOMETHING INSIDE ME--SOME KNOT, SOME TANGLE OF FEAR AND ANGER AND SO *MUCH MORE...*

...HAS FINALLY BEEN *UNTIED.*

ALL THESE YEARS: FLEEING RUSSIA, SUFFOCATING IN AMERICA, FINDING RELEASE...FINDING *HONOR*...IN THE JUNGLE.

ALL THESE YEARS--AND I'VE NEVER KNOWN PEACE OR CALM OR THAT ELUSIVE THING CALLED *HAPPINESS.*

BUT I FEEL AS IF I CAN KNOW IT NOW. THAT IT'S NEARBY. JUST OUTSIDE PERHAPS...

...HIDDEN IN THE PATTER OF THE RAIN, THE DRUMBEAT OF THE THUNDER.

PEACE, CALM, HAPPINESS.

AN *ENDING.*

SOON.

Next:
Burning Bright

THIS MAN, THIS...*KAINE*. AT FIRST I TOOK HIM FOR JUST ANOTHER HIRED KILLER--SENT HERE BY THAT FOOL *DENTON* TO SATISFY HIS MISPLACED CRAVING FOR REVENGE.

BUT I SEE NOW THAT IT WASN'T DENTON AT ALL.

IT WAS *DESTINY*.

AN UNTOLD TALE OF KRAVEN THE HUNTER

HUNTING THE HUNTER

PART FOUR: BURNING BRIGHT

J.M. DEMATTEIS	MAX FIUMARA	FABIO D'AURIA	VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA	TOM BRENNAN	STEPHEN WACKER	TOM BREVOORT	JOE QUESADA	DAN BUCKLEY	ALAN FINE
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THERE IS AN AURA AROUND THIS ONE. AN...*ENERGY* THAT I'VE GLIMPSED BEFORE, DANCING ON THE PERIPHERY OF MY VISION...

...WHEN HERBS AND ROOTS HAVE *WIDENED* MY CONSCIOUSNESS. WHEN THE UNIVERSE HAS UNFOLDED INTO DEEP *MEANING*...

STOP!

...AND DEEPER *CHAOS.*

DON'T *WORRY*, SIR--*WE'RE HERE.*

I'M NOT WORRIED IN THE LEAST, *MR. DABIKU.*

BUT REST ASSURED THAT, HOWEVER *NOBLE* YOUR MOTIVES--

--I DON'T NEED YOUR HELP.

I COULD NEVER SEE IT CLEARLY, BUT I COULD *FEEL* IT: A THING OF SPITE AND CRUELTY AND ARROGANCE...

...TAUNTING ME.

"*WHAT ARE YOU?*" I WOULD ASK: NO ANSWER WOULD COME. BUT *NOW* I SEE.

NOW I *KNOW.*

IT IS THE MONSTER THAT DEVOURED MY HOMELAND, CONSUMED MY MOTHER'S SANITY, DROVE ME INTO THE JUNGLES--

THE SPIDER.

YES, IT HAS A *NAME* NOW. AND SOMEHOW...IT'S ALIVE IN *KAINE*. ALIVE...

...AND *HUNGRY.*

THE SPIDER WANTS MY HEART, MY SANITY, MY *VERY SOUL.* AND I DON'T KNOW IF I HAVE THE STRENGTH--OR THE *WILL*--

...TO *STOP* IT.

...Y'KNOW, KRAVINOFF--I *SEE* THINGS SOMETIMES. FRAGMENTS OF THE *FUTURE*. I GUESS YOU COULD CALL THEM *VISIONS*.

YOU WERE *IN* ONE OF THOSE VISIONS. STANDING OVER MY CORPSE. THE *INSTRUMENT* OF MY *DEATH*.

THAT'S WHY I *CAME* HERE, Y'KNOW. I WAS HOPING YOU'D BE THE ONE TO DO...WHAT I COULD NEVER DO FOR *MYSELF*.

I WAS WRONG.
YOU'RE NOT MY DEATH.
I'M YOURS.
AND THAT REALLY PISSES ME OFF.
HERE LIES KAINE
SLAIN BY THE HUNTER
THAT'S WHY I'M NOT GONNA JUST KILL YOU. NO--
--I'M GONNA BURY YOU ALIVE.
SHUK SHUK
SHUK SHUK
SHUK
SHUK
SHUK
SHUK SHUK
SHUK
SPYDER! SPYDER! BURNING BRIGHT
IN THE FORESTS OF THE NIGHT,
SHUK
WHAT IMMORTAL HAND OR EYE
COULD FRAME THY FEARFUL

SYMMETRY?

IF THIS *IS* DESTINY, SPIDER-- THEN I *EMBRACE* IT, I EMBRACE *YOU*, AS I LIVED...

...WITH THE *FULLNESS* OF MY PASSION, THE *INFERNO* OF MY HATE.

AND IF I'M MEANT TO *DIE* AS WE GRAPPLE HERE TONIGHT...

CHUFT

SHUK

CHUD

CHUD

CHUD

...SO BE IT?

THREE DAYS IN THE GROUND. IN THE GRAVE.

THREE DAYS IN THE WARM AND WELCOME DARK.

BUT IT TAKES MORE THAN *THAT* TO SLAY THE HUNTER.

FOR DECADES I HAVE KEPT THIS BODY STRONG AND YOUNG, FED IT ROOTS AND HERBS AND POTIONS THAT HAVE KEPT *TIME* AND *DISEASE* AT BAY.

MY ***WOUNDS*** HEAL WITH MIRACULOUS SPEED. I AM *IMMUNE* TO THE RAVAGES OF AGE.

IF ONLY MY ***HEART*** WERE IMMUNE, AS WELL.

THREE DAYS IN THE GROUND. IN THE GRAVE. THREE DAYS IN THE WARM AND WELCOME DARK.

BUT *NO DEATH* FOR SERGEI KRAVINOFF.

NOT *YET*.

FOR THE GROUND WHISPERED TO ME. THE GRAVE TOLD ME ITS SECRETS. AND THE DARK?

THE DARK *ENLIGHTENED* ME.

AND I SAW THAT THIS KAINE IS *NOT* THE SPYDER... BUT ITS *HERALD:* CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, ANNOUNCING ITS ARRIVAL.

SAW, TOO, THE *TRUE FACE* OF THE SPIDER'S VESSEL. SAW IT--AND RECOGNIZED IT.

FOR WE HAVE MET *BEFORE*. AND, SOON... WE WILL MEET *AGAIN*.

FOR THE *FINAL TIME.*

...I GOT FIVE WITNESSES THAT SWEAR HE'S *ALIVE!*

KRAVEN'S **ALIVE**, DAMMIT!

HONESTLY? I'M NOT *SURPRISED.*

YOU NEVER CAN *TRUST* THOSE JUNGLE *WITCH* DOCTORS.

YOU THINK THIS IS *FUNNY?* YOU THINK THIS IS SOME KIND OF FREAKIN' *JOKE?*

IN A STRANGE WAY--

--I DO.

AHH!!

IF *KRAVINOFF* IS ALIVE--THEN PERHAPS MY *VISION* IS, TOO.

THINK ABOUT IT, GENTLEMEN--

PERHAPS THE DAY WILL COME WHEN HE PUTS *ME* IN THAT GRAVE... AND ENDS THIS FARCE OF A LIFE ONCE AND FOR ALL.

OR, *HELL*--MAYBE I'LL NEVER CROSS PATHS WITH THE HUNTER AGAIN.

THAT'S BETTER.

TIME WILL TELL, I GUESS.

IT ALWAYS *DOES.*

The End

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN PRESENTS: BLACK CAT #1

Black Cat:

I ONLY CAME BECAUSE I KNEW *YOU'D* BE HERE.

I WAS THINKING OF YOU AS I *DRESSED* FOR *TONIGHT*.

FOR *US*.

The Trophy Hunters

Part one

I KNOW YOU NEED TO BE *CHASED*. THAT'S OKAY.

I *LIKE* THE FLIRTATION.

A LITTLE MANEUVERING... JUST TO GET YOU *ALONE*.

IT'S EXQUISITE. SO *CLOSE* I CAN ALMOST *TASTE* YOU, AND--

KRSH

--AND THEN SOME DAMN *DRUNK* BARGES IN LOOKING FOR THE *JOHN*.

Jen Van Meter
writer

Javier Pulido
artist

Matt Hollingsworth
colors

Vc's Joe Caramagna
letters

--DON'T WANT TO DO THIS, MAN! THERE'S--→UNF←-- NOTHING--

IT'S A %#$* JEWELRY STORE! I KNOW THERE'S--

→KKRCHT← SAFEGUARD SECURITY EIGHT SEVEN, STATUS-- →KKRCHT←

HEY, EASY THERE. JUST--JUST STAY--

SHUT UP AND LEMME INTO THE VAULT!

HE CAN'T, YOU IDIOT.

CRUNCH

THE VAULT'S A WESTON NINETY-TWO A-CLASS. REDUNDANT TIME-LOCKS. DOUBLE COMBINATION. KAGI DELTA-EIGHT FINGERPRINT I.D. READER.

THIS POOR GUY'S JUST HERE TO KEEP BRICK-MONKEYS LIKE YOU FROM MESSING UP THE CARPET...AND TO TRIGGER THE SILENT ALARM.

THEN YOU-- YOU GET ME IN THERE! GO ON-- YOU KNOW SO MUCH--!

AID AND ABET A HALF-ASSED SMASH 'N'GRAB?

NO CAN DO, SUNSHINE. A GIRL'S GOT TO LOOK OUT FOR HER REPUTATION.

DO IT! I'M NOT $##%ING AROUND HERE!

BLAM!

NEITHER AM I. TRUST ME. I'M DOING YOU A FAVOR--

COPS'LL BE HERE IN A *MINUTE*. YOU *DON'T* WANT *THAT* IN YOUR--

HEY, SPIDER. *NICE* TIMING.

REALLY? SHOULD I EVEN *ASK* WHAT A NICE CAT LIKE *YOU* IS DOING IN A--

OUCH. YOU KNOW, YOU'RE THE *ONLY* WOMAN I'VE *EVER FALLEN* FOR.

HEH! HOW *LONG'VE* YOU BEEN WAITING TO USE *THAT* ONE?

AND *YOU*--

--DON'T *INTERRUPT*. THE *GROWN-UPS* ARE *TALKING*.

WELL, THEN.

CAN I-- UH--*WRAP* THAT *UP* FOR YOU, MISS?

PLEASE.

AFTER *THIS*, WANNA GRAB SOME *SUSHI* AND MEET ME AT THE *POLLARD?*

THEY'RE *RENOVATING*. THREE FLOORS OF UNBOOKED *ROOMS*...

"...AND A BED IN EVERY ONE."

I KNOW WHY I'M TALKY-- I DON'T SPEND THREE WEEKS PREPPING A JOB SO SOME SLOB CAN STEP ON MY ACT. BUT YOU...

...YOU'RE EDGY. WHAT'S GOING ON?

HAVEN'T BEEN SLEEPING WELL. DREAMS-- ALMOST EVERY NIGHT NOW.

EVERYTHING IN RUSSIAN...I CAN'T EXPLAIN WHY IT'S GETTING TO ME.

IT'S LIKE BEING STALKED. MAKES YOU FEEL VULNERABLE-- EXPOSED.

THAT'S EXACTLY IT. AND IT FEELS...DIRECTED-- LIKE SOMETHING'S COMING BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT. LISTEN...

...YOU KNOW I NEED TO RETURN THESE TO THE OWNER, RIGHT?

I DON'T WANT YOU TO THINK I--

NO, IT'S COOL.

I GOT WHAT I WAS REALLY AFTER TONIGHT.

COMMISSIONED BY *ELIZABETH* THE FIRST FOR SIR ROBERT *DUDLEY* WHEN SHE WAS FORBIDDEN TO *MARRY* HIM. SIXTEEN-EIGHTY.

STOLEN FROM HIS BROTHER'S *HEIRS* IN EIGHTEEN-TWENTY. BEEN MOVING AROUND ON THE *BLACK* MARKET EVER *SINCE*.

IT *COULD* BE THE *BEST* OFFER WILL COME FROM ONE OF THE BRITISH *MUSEUMS*...*IF* WE CAN DEMONSTRATE ITS LEGITIMACY.

AND THE REVERE WEDDING BANDS?

HAD TO SACRIFICE *PAWNS* TO KEEP THE *QUEEN*. ANOTHER TIME, MAYBE.

THE GOLDSMITH'S *MARK* IS STILL CLEAR... *ENGRAVING'S* WORN...

HAVE YOU GIVEN ANY *THOUGHT* TO THE *RUSSIANS?*

THE-- WHAT DO YOU *MEAN?*

THE IMPERIAL *FABERGÉ* COLLECTION IS COMING TO THE *FRITTZ* MUSEUM. I HAVE A *CLIENT* WHO *ASKED*...

OH, *THAT*. I DON'T KNOW... THE FRITT'S NEVER BEEN MUCH *FUN*.

YOU MIND IF I HANG ONTO *THIS* WHILE YOU LOOK FOR A BUYER? I KIND OF *HATE* TO SAY GOODBYE SO *SOON*.

Several Years Ago.

THE...*PARTING*... HAS OF *COURSE* PAINED ME *DEEPLY*. OUR LOVE WAS... *UNRIVALED*.

IT IS *GOOD* OF YOU TO TAKE TIME FROM YOUR *STUDIES* TO PAY YOUR *RESPECTS*.

I AM NOT *SURPRISED*-- YOUR MOTHER WAS *LOYAL* TO THE *LAST*. YOUR *FATHER*, PERHAPS, TOOK DUTY TOO FAR...

AND FOR *THAT* I APOLOGIZE, MA'AM. WHEN I LEARNED MY *FATHER* HAD ABETTED YOUR HUSBAND'S SUICIDE, I--

YOU OWE ME *NO* APOLOGY. AND YOUR FATHER GAVE *HIS*...IN THE *END*.

AH, *COME*, DEAR. I WISH YOU *MEET* SOMEONE.

ANASTASIA, *THIS* IS VASILI HOLPKIN SIDOROV. YOUR *FRENCH* TUTOR IS HIS *AUNT*.

VASILI--MY YOUNGEST CHILD, ANASTASIA KRAVINOFF.

I'M PLEASED TO *MEET* YOU, SIR. YOUR AUNT IS VERY *PATIENT*.

THE PLEASURE IS *MINE*, MISS. I'M *SURE* YOU ARE A *FINE* STUDENT.

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO VASILI'S FAMILY, ANA. IT IS THE HOUSE-KEEPER'S LEDGER OF MY FAMILY...

...ALL THE VALUABLES, RECORDED, UPDATED...SO THOROUGH.

SEE HERE, "SILVER SAMOVAR BY KORGEV, RECEIVED JUNE 12, EIGHTEEN-SIXTEEN, OF COUNT PETROVICH, TO SATISFY A SLIGHT."

CLEARLY THIS PETROVICH HAD OFFENDED YOUR GREAT-GRANDFATHER, AND GAVE HIM THE SAMOVAR TO AVOID A DUEL.

IS EVERYTHING IN THIS BOOK A PRIZE, MAMAN?

SO LIKE YOUR FATHER. YES, THESE THINGS WOULD BE TREASURES TO ANYONE, BUT TO US, THEY ARE EACH TOKENS OF ONE TRIUMPH OR ANOTHER.

THESE NOTES SAY...WAS IT ALL STOLEN BY THE BOLSHEVIK DOGS?

WE HAVE A FEW PIECES I CAN SHOW YOU, BUT YES, MOST ARE NOW IN LESSER HANDS. SO MUCH WAS LEFT BEHIND...

YOU MUST KEEP THIS, OF COURSE, VASILI. IT IS YOUR FAMILY'S LEGACY.

BUT I'M GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR CARING FOR IT, AND FOR BRINGING IT.

IT GIVES ME THE COMFORT OF MEMORY, AND HOPE...TO IMAGINE THAT ALL COULD BE MADE RIGHT...

"...THAT EVERYTHING CAN BE RESTORED... TO AS IT SHOULD BE."

Chicago. Today.

KRSSH

THIS WAY!

reet reet reet reet re

CHECK IT OUT, BART. WE'RE GONNA BE ON THE NEWS!

--ONLY ONE PIECE TAKEN IN WHAT INVESTIGATORS ARE CALLING A BOTCHED EFFORT ON THE PART OF THE NOTORIOUS THIEF BLACK CAT, A MINOR CELEBRITY SINCE--(TK)

WANT TO SEE THE REST? ABOUT HOW USUALLY YOU'RE SO GOOD THEY DON'T KNOW THEY'VE BEEN ROBBED--?

IT WASN'T ME!

YOU KNOW HOW IT WORKS!

IF YOU LOOK BAD TO THE PEOPLE WHO COUNT, SO DO THE GIRLS WHO GEAR YOU!

I DON'T THINK SHE'S LYING, KYOKO.

AND IF YOU GET CAUGHT, THE COPS ARE ON US FASTER THAN YOU ON SPI--

THE POET GOT ME THE INSURANCE INVESTIGATOR'S REPORTS. IT WAS REAL FUR THEY FOUND, PROBABLY FOX.

I USED ACRYLIC. AND EVEN IF THEY'RE WRONG ABOUT THE FUR, THERE'RE NO PULLS...IT WASN'T HER.

LIKE I'VE BEEN SAYING! THANK YOU, TAMI!

YOU WANT TO THANK HER? HOW ABOUT YOU FIND THE HACK WHO'S FRAMING YOU...

"...BEFORE ALL OUR *REPUTATIONS* ARE IN THE *TOILET.*"

Sonoma, California.

HONEY? WHY ARE YOU IN--*HEY!*

WHAT THE--?

BLAM!!!

--STILL *BREATHING,* YES, BUT IT DOESN'T *SOUND* GOOD, AND HE ISN'T OPENING HIS *EYES.*

STAY *WITH* ME, BABY, AN *AMBULANCE* IS COMING. I'M *HERE*... FEEL MY *HAND?*

WHAT'S *THAT?* THE *BURGLAR?* I'M *SORRY,* I DIDN'T *SEE*...BUT I *THINK* MY *HUSBAND* DID.

"I DON'T THINK I SHOULD BE SEEN WITH YOU RIGHT NOW."

WHO'S GONNA *SEE* US, BYRON? YOU *NEVER* LEAVE YOUR APARTMENT!

PLEASE, POET! YOUR UPSTAIRS *NEIGHBOR* JUST CALLED THE ELEVATOR.

I *SHOULDN'T* EVEN *KNOW* YOU...OH, ALL *RIGHT*--

AND YOU'RE *WRONG*. I WENT TO THE *MET* WITH *DAN* JUST LAST MONTH.

I DIDN'T *DO* IT. YOU *KNOW* I DON'T NEED A *GUN*--

I *KNOW*. BUT COUNTING YOU, YOUR GIRLS IN BROOKLYN, AND THE *PHONY*, THAT'S *FIVE* OF US. OUT *THERE* IT'S *HURTING* ME.

TO GET *GOOD* INFORMATION FOR YOU, I HAVE TO BE TRUSTED ABOUT YOU.

AND FOLKS ARE *THINKING* YOU'VE *SUCKERED* ME FOR THE *RUSSIANS*.

THE *WHA*-- RUSSIANS *AGAIN?*

THE PIECES *TAKEN* IN SONOMA AND CHICAGO?

BOTH LEFT RUSSIA WHEN *STALIN* STARTED SELLING *OFF* ALL THE STUFF *APPROPRIATED* FROM THE NOBILITY. *SOMEBODY* WANTS THEM BACK.

LOOK, A *STRING* OF SIMILAR PIECES STOLEN OVER THE LAST *FIVE* YEARS, *NONE* OF THEM SEEN AGAIN *SINCE*. TECHNIQUES *REPEAT* A LOT--

TO *OTHERS* IN OUR LINE, IT *LOOKS* LIKE YOU'VE BEEN *CHEATING* ON ME ALL THAT TIME.

I *NEED* TO *KNOW*. THIS *PERSON*--OR CREW--HAS BEEN DOING *FINE*...

...WHY PULL *YOU* INTO IT? WHY *NOW?*

"LIKE *SOMETHING'S COMING*, BUT I DON'T KNOW *WHAT*..."

THIS-- *WHOEVER* IT IS-- IS IN SOMETHING *ELSE*. THEY'RE *TRYING* TO DRAW ME *OUT*, TO USE ME AS *BAIT*.

THERE'S A *LOT* OF RUSSIAN ART THIS CREW *DOESN'T* TAKE. WHAT'S THE *LINK* BETWEEN THE THINGS THEY *DO?*

YOU'RE *NOT* THINKING--

THE *FABERGÉS* OPEN ON WEDNESDAY. I'LL BET *ANYTHING* THERE'S *SOMETHING* THERE THEY'LL BE *AFTER*.

I NEED TO KNOW WHEN AND HOW THEY'LL GO *IN*, AND WHAT THEY *WANT*.

ONLY WHEN AND HOW. IF YOU'RE RIGHT, *THIS* JOB--OR THE ONE *AFTER* IT--IS SOME KIND OF *AMBUSH*-- THE *WHAT* DOESN'T MATTER.

PROMISE ME YOU WON'T GET *DISTRACTED* BY THE *SHINY*.

DON'T *WORRY*. I *KNOW* WHEN IT'S TIME TO IGNORE THE *PRIZE* AND EAT THE STUPID *CEREAL*.

"THEY'LL EXPECT *YOU* TO USE THE *SKYLIGHTS*--IT'S YOUR *STYLE*...

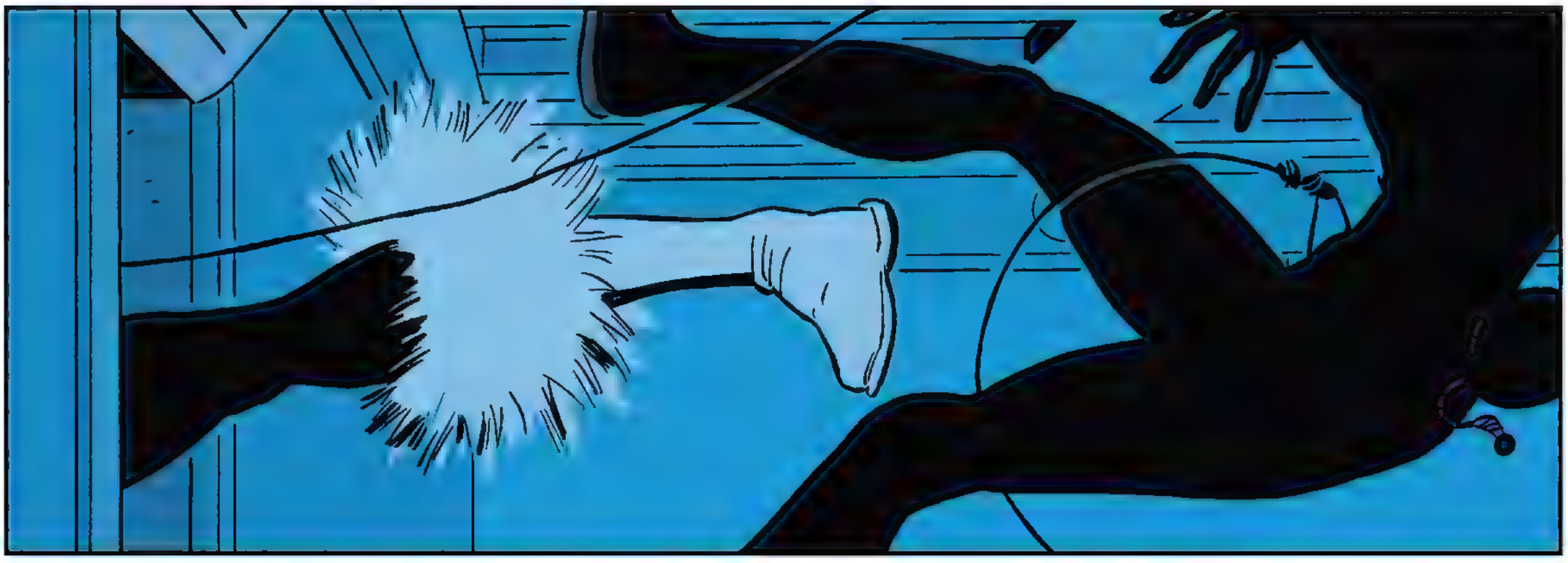
"... BUT YOUR *IMPOSTER*-- FOUR TO ONE ODDS THEY'LL USE THE *DUCTS*.

"SECURITY IS *MOSTLY* HUMAN BECAUSE OF THE *AGE* OF THE *BUILDING*...

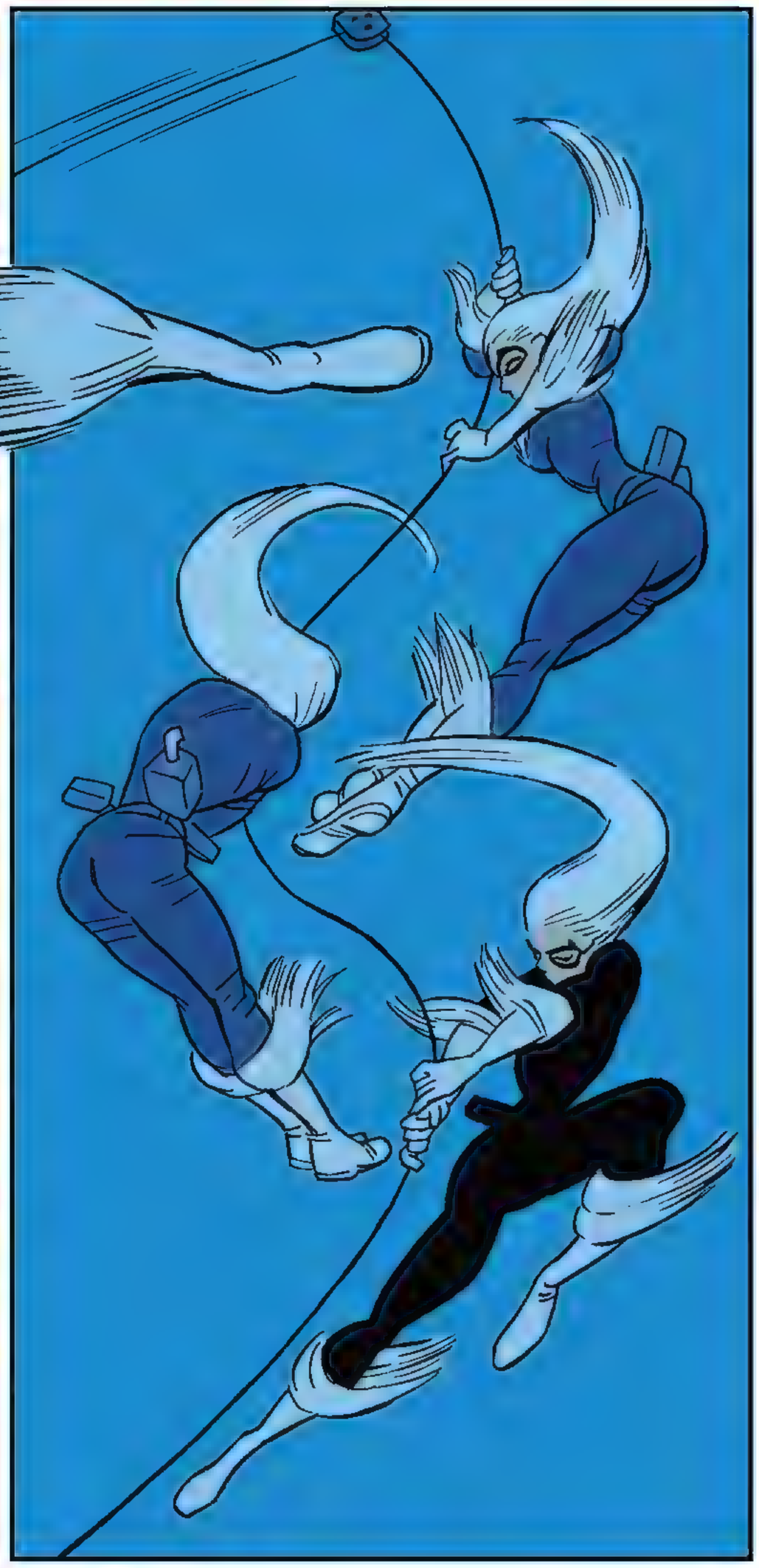
"ONCE THE *TARGET'S* DISABLED THE *MOTION* SENSORS, YOU'RE *GOLDEN*."

"*WEIGHT* ALARMS IN THE *CASES* MEANS PROBABLY AN *AERIAL* RIG. THEY'LL BE *VULNERABLE*."

"HIT THEM *EARLY*, AND REMEMBER WHAT YOU *SAID*..."



HELLO, CEREAL.



HELLO, PRIZE.

I NEED THAT.

I KNOW.

÷KKRK÷ UNIT NINE, GOING TEN-SEVEN ON ONE, OVER. ÷KRRK÷

÷KRCHH÷ COPY THAT, NINE. ÷KCHH÷

SHHH. YOU HAVE *HURT* MY *REPUTATION.* MY *LIVELIHOOD.*

GIVE ME A *REASON* TO *NOT* HURT *YOU,* JUST *THIS* LITTLE BIT.

IT'S...IT'S *PRICELESS.*

WRONG. A MILLION-SEVEN AT ITS LAST *AUCTION.*

CRTCH

YOU... YOU'VE RUINED *EVERYTHING.*

SONOVA--

YOU WANT TO *FINISH* THIS *OUTSIDE?* FINE. NO *WAY* ARE WE *DONE* HERE.

OH NO YOU *DON'T!*

OH NO *YOU* DON'T!

NOT *NOW.* LEMME *GO*-- HE'S GETTING *AWAY!*

HE'S NOT *IMPORTANT.* YOU *ARE.*

WHO ARE YOU WORKING FOR, STEALING ALL THIS RUSSIAN STUFF?

DID YOU THINK I WOULDN'T READ THE PAPERS?

NO, I THOUGHT YOU'D KNOW A FRAME WHEN YOU SAW IT.

YOU KNOW THAT BAD LUCK YOU HAVE WHEN I'M AROUND...?

LOOK, I'M NOT WORKING FOR ANYONE, ALRIGHT? IT WASN'T ME.

YEAH? OKAY, SO WHY ARE YOU HERE? WHAT DID YOU TAKE?

NOT A DAMN THING! GO AHEAD, FRISK ME. YOU KNOW YOU WANT TO.

LOOK, I'M SORRY. THIS IS STUPID. I JUST THOUGHT...

...I'D WORK WITH SOMEONE WHO WANTS TO HURT YOU. NICE.

STAY THE HELL AWAY FROM ME. THIS THING WE HAD...?

FRITTZ MUSEUM

...OVER.

YOU *WOULD* SAY THAT, BUT I *REALLY* THOUGHT HE *KNEW* ME BETTER.

YEAH. *ANYHOW*, IT MADE IT *EASIER* TO BLOW HIM *OFF*, AND *THAT'S* WHAT--OH, *SORRY!* LISTEN, BYRON, CALL YOU *RIGHT BACK?*

I'VE *JUST* GOT TO GET MY *BAG* BACK FROM *SECURITY.*

ESY HER SITORS LEASE TAKE ELEPHONE CALLS OUTSIDE

LEAVING *ALREADY?* YOU JUST *GOT* HERE.

STUPID *CALL*...HEY DO *YOU* KNOW IF THERE'S A *CALENDAR* FOR THE *LECTURES?*

TABLE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE *STAIR* THERE, MISS. AND COME BACK *SOON.*

bwoot bwoot

AGAIN? DANG THING NEEDS A *RESET*, SORRY--

THE *TECH* GUY'S ON HIS *WAY*, BUT I *HAVE* TO LOOK AT YOUR *BAGS* AGAIN.

YOU'RE GOOD TO GO-- *THING'S* ACTING UP. FIND THAT *CALENDAR?*

YEAH, THANKS. HAVE A *GREAT* DAY, NOW!

YOUR TIMING WAS *PERFECT*, BYRON, AS ALWAYS. ALMOST *HOME* NOW.

YEAH, YEAH, YEAH, YOU *TOLD* ME SO...YES...

...NO, YOU'RE *RIGHT*. I GOT *DISTRACTED* BY THE *SHINY--*

--I KNOW... BUT THE WAY IT WENT *DOWN*, HE *WOULD* HAVE GOTTEN AWAY *ANYHOW*, AND I'D BE *EMPTY-HANDED*.

AT LEAST *THIS* WAY, I'VE GOT *SOMETHING* I CAN *USE*.

I *KNOW* SOMEONE WHO'S *PROBABLY* IN *TOUCH* WITH OUR IMPOSTER.

I'LL TALK TO *HIM* TONIGHT.

FIRST FIELDING
FINE ART & JEWELRY

SAW YOUR *LIGHTS* WERE ON. HOPE YOU'RE NOT TOO *BUSY*.

LISTEN, I KNOW I *SAID* I WASN'T *INTO* IT, BUT I'VE GOT SOMETHING THAT *CLIENT* OF YOURS MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN ...

...ERNST?

brrt
brrt

brrt
brrt

I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED YOU WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO DESTROY SUCH A TREASURE.

YOU. YOU KILLED ERNST FIELDING. WHY?

HE COULD HAVE TOLD YOU THINGS I DO NOT WANT YOU TO KNOW.

ISN'T THAT WHY YOU BROUGHT THE EGG TO HIM? TO GET INFORMATION?

HOW DO YOU KNOW--?

GO AHEAD. OPEN IT.

NOW TELL ME, FELICIA HARDY...

...WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU LOOKED IN ON YOUR MOTHER?

CONNER

BYRON, IT'S ME. RUN.

IF SECURITY'S COMPROMISED, I NEED CONFIRMATION THAT IT'S YOU.

I BRING YOU *HOT DOGS* WITH *KRAUT* AND MUSTARD.

YOUR FIRST *THREE* BOYFRIENDS WERE *ALL* NAMED ALEX.

NOW-- GRAB WHAT YOU NEED AND GO.

TOM BRENNAN
ASST. EDITOR

STEPHEN WACKER
EDITOR

TOM BREVOORT
EXEC. EDITOR

JOE QUESADA
EDITOR IN CHIEF

DAN BUCKLEY
PUBLISHER

ALAN FINE
EXEC. PRODUCER

WHAT'S HAPPENED?

HE *KILLED* MY BEST FENCE. HE *KNOWS* WHO I *AM*.

PLEASE, BYRON. I NEED YOU TO *DO* THIS, AND I *NEED* YOU TO PASS IT ON TO THE BROOKLYN GIRLS.

YOU *KNOW* HOW I *FEEL* ABOUT LEAVING MY *PLACE*. ARE YOU *SURE*--?

MATT HOLLINGSWORTH
COLOR ART

VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA
LETTERS

SURE YOU'LL FEEL *WORSE* ABOUT THIS FREAK *CORNERING* YOU THERE WITH A *GUN*.

LOOK, THIS IS A *CLEAN* PHONE. TEXT ME A *TIME* AND *PLACE* AND WE'LL SORT IT OUT *LATER*.

AND YOU'RE DOING IT, *BECAUSE*--?

WHY NOT *NOW*?

I'M HEADING UPSTATE FOR A *MEET*.

THERE'S SOMETHING *HE* WANTS ME TO *DO*.

JEN VAN METER
WRITER

JAVIER PULIDO
ARTIST, pg. 1-17

JAVIER RODRIGUEZ
ARTIST, pg. 18-23

HE SAYS HE'S GOT MY MOTHER.

SCREECH

Black Cat: The Trophy Hunters Part Two

HI. CAN YOU PLEASE TELL ME WHICH *UNIT* IS LYDIA HARDY'S? I'M HER *DAUGHTER.*

OH, IS IT HER *BIRTHDAY?* YOUR--IT *MUST* HAVE BEEN YOUR COUSIN WHO WAS HERE LAST NIGHT, THEN.

OH, REALLY-- *WHICH* COUSIN? DID HE GIVE HIS *NAME?*

I DON'T *THINK* SO. *NICE* GUY. *YOUR* AGE, MAYBE?

LONG *DARK* HAIR, VERY *HANDSOME--*

THAT *UNIT* NUMBER?

IT'S TWO-TWO-THREE. ALL THE WAY *BACK* AND ON THE *LEFT.*

SHE'S *LIVED* HERE TWO *YEARS.* PERHAPS IF YOU HAD *VISITED--*

♯ANH!♯---

OR *PERHAPS,* IF *SHE* HAD SENT A *BIRTHDAY* CARD...

...SHE'S JUST *LUCKY* I ♯MFF♯ *BOTHERED* TO FIND OUT SHE'D ♯HN♯ *MOVED* IN THE *FIRST* PLACE.

Redial.

SO. NOW YOU KNOW I'M SERIOUS.

KNEW THAT WHEN I FOUND ERNST FIELDING'S BODY.

I WANT TO TALK TO HER.

FELICIA, IS THAT YOU? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? THIS MAN SAYS--

HE'S PROBABLY LYING, MOM.

LISTEN... HAS HE HURT YOU, TIED YOU UP--?

NO, ONLY A BLINDFOLD IN THE CAR...BUT HE DOES HAVE A GUN.

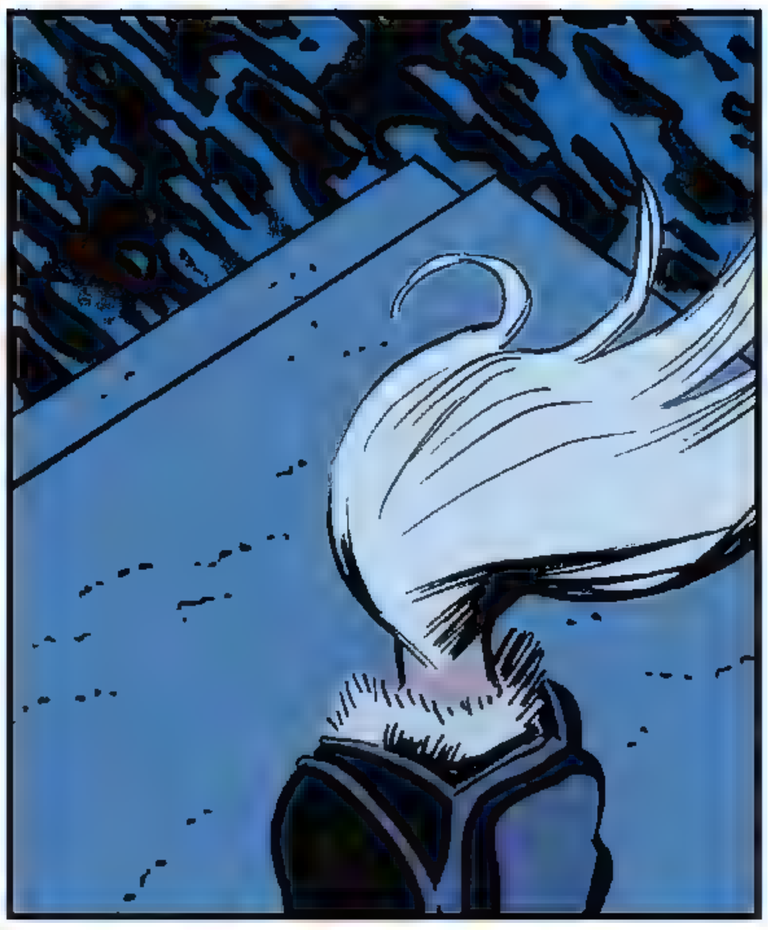
OKAY, MOM. YOU JUST STAY CALM. I'M GOING TO--

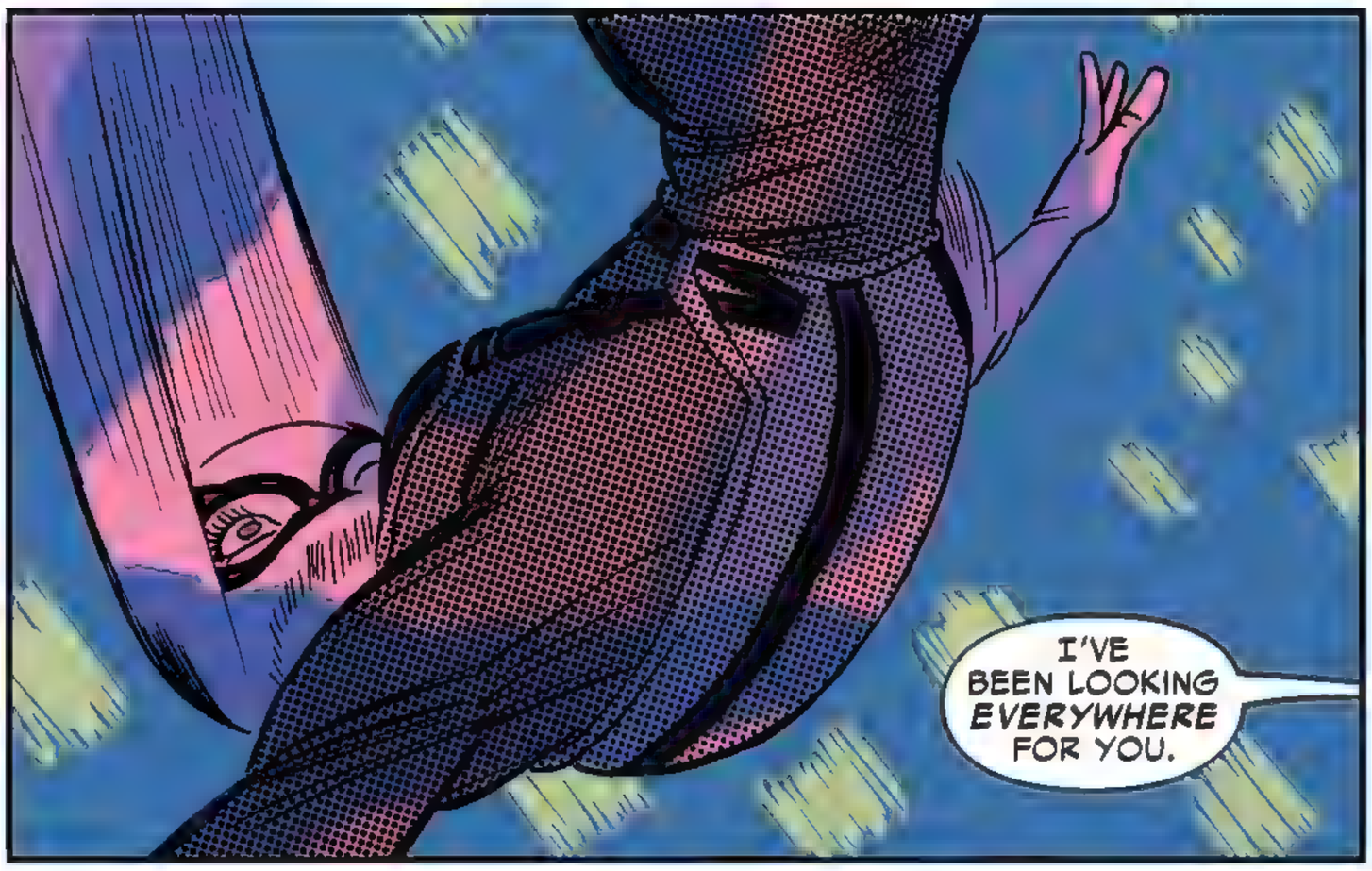
THE MAKAROVA TIARA. MUZEUL BUCURESTI. YOU HAVE SEVEN DAYS.

SEVEN DAYS? YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING! A JOB LIKE THAT TAKES--

SEVEN DAYS. →KLK←

PASSPOR




I'VE BEEN LOOKING *EVERYWHERE* FOR YOU.

YEAH? WELL, THERE ARE OVER FOUR MILLION *OTHER WOMEN* IN THIS CITY.

I'M *SURE* ONE OF *THEM* HAS A KINK FOR WEBS.

I'M *NOT* JOKING *AROUND* HERE--

SURE YOU ARE. THAT'S WHAT YOU *DO*.

ERNST FIELDING--

WAS A *FRIEND* OF MINE. AND SOMEONE *KILLED* HIM.

SOMEONE *ELSE*.

I *BELIEVE* YOU.

YIPPEE. I'D *HATE* TO HAVE YOU THINK ME A KILLER *AND* A LIAR.

WHY ARE YOU *BEING* LIKE THIS? WHY WON'T YOU JUST *STOP* AND *TALK* TO ME?!

I WANT *YOU* TO GO *AWAY* AND I HAVE *SOMEWHERE* TO BE.

WOULD HAVE *THOUGHT* IT WAS *OBVIOUS*.

LOOK--I *KNOW* YOU'RE MIXED UP IN SOMETHING *MESSY* AND DANGEROUS, *SOMETHING* TO DO WITH THAT *RUSSIAN ART*--

WHY ARE YOU WORKING SO *HARD* TO KEEP ME IN THE *DARK*?

BECAUSE IT *ISN'T ABOUT YOU!*

HONESTLY, SPIDER, IT PROBABLY IS. AND I *DON'T* WANT YOU ANYWHERE *NEAR* IT.

SHOULD HAVE *GUESSED* YOU'D WANT TO MEET *HERE*.

ACTUALLY, IT WAS *TAMI'S* IDEA. SHE *KNOWS* SOME PEOPLE--

THERE ARE OVER *SIXTY* WAYS IN AND OUT.

I THOUGHT IT *WISE* NOT TO BE EASILY *TRAPPED*.

YOU'RE *LATE*. TROUBLE CLEARING THE *CACHES*?

JUST...AN *INTERRUPTION*.

YOU GUYS GET *ANYTHING*?

THE GIRLS ARE *WANTED* IN ROMANIA--

OOH-- WHAT *FOR*?

FOCUS, CHIEF.

I DON'T HAVE *TIME* TO BUILD CLEAN *I.D.S*, AND *YOU* HAVEN'T HIT THE BUCHAREST MUSEUM SINCE THEY ADDED THE *MODERN* WING.

TRYING TO GET SPECS ON IT. NOT MUCH SO FAR.

ANYTHING ON MY "*COUSIN*"?

MAYBE. ALL THE PIECES *STOLEN* SO FAR HAD *SEVERAL* THINGS IN *COMMON*-- PROVENANCE, PERIOD, CHANGED HANDS A LOT.

BUT THE MAKAROVA TIARA ONLY SHARES ONE THING WITH ALL THE REST...

...A FAMILY CALLED KRAVINOFF.

WELL, $#*%. I'D *REALLY* HOPED I WAS *WRONG* ABOUT *THAT*.

"*EVERY* ONE OF THE THINGS *LINKED* TO THIS GUY IS *KNOWN* TO HAVE BELONGED TO THEM AT *SOME* POINT *BEFORE* THE REVOLUTION...

"...BUT THE *THING* IS, *NONE* OF THE LIVING MALES I CAN *FIND* MATCH YOUR GUY'S DESCRIPTION.

"IT *SEEMS* LIKE *YOUR* GUY IS *STALKING* THEIR *HISTORY*..."

IT REALLY IS THE ONE...I'M SURE MAMA WILL BE PLEASED.

ARE YOU GOING TO GET IT *ALL* BACK FOR US?

I HAVE BEEN WORKING TOWARD *JUST* THAT, MISS ANASTASIA...

...BUT I ACQUIRED *THIS* AND COULD NOT *RESIST* BRINGING IT RIGHT AWAY--YOU *ADMIRED* ITS STORY AS A CHILD.

I BELIEVE I *READ* OF A PIECE *LIKE* THIS BEING STOLEN--AND A MAN SHOT.

BY THE SPIDER'S *HARLOT*.

I OVERHEARD YOUR *MOTHER* SAYING SHE MIGHT BE A *NUISANCE*. I TOOK IT UPON MYSELF TO *DISTRACT* HER.

SUCH *LOYALTY* IS A BLESSING TO US. BUT *MAMA* OFTEN SAYS *INITIATIVE* IS ONLY FOR *ALPHAS*. BE *CAREFUL*.

HAVE YOU SECURED THIS *SWORD* YET? "TAKEN FROM THE DISGRACED EMPEROR..."

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE *THAT*.

IT HAS BEEN ONE OF THE *HARDEST* TO GET. BUT I WILL BE *PROUD* TO PLACE IT IN YOUR HANDS ONE DAY.

ANA. YOUR *BROTHER* AWAITS YOU IN THE SALLE D'ARMES.

"HE'S BEEN *AT* THIS FOR FIVE *YEARS* AND ONLY *NOW* INVOLVES YOU, SO IT *CAN'T* JUST BE ABOUT YOU *OR* SPIDER-MAN."

"*COULD* BE HE'S JUST BEEN *HIRED* BY THE FAMILY, SOME GAME OF *THEIRS*."

NAH...IT'S TOO *PERSONAL*. HE KIDNAPPED HER *MOM*.

MAYBE HE'S JUST *MAKING* IT PERSONAL FOR *HER* BECAUSE *HE* CAN'T GET THE TIARA *HIMSELF*. OR MAYBE SHE'S JUST *BAIT*.

IT DOESN'T *HAVE* TO BE *HIS* OBSESSION--

I MAKE A *NICE* LIVING, IN *PART* BY UNDERSTANDING *COLLECTORS* AND THEIR *OBSESSIONS*.

THIS GUY'S *PATTERN* DOES *NOT* READ LIKE WORK FOR *HIRE*. HE'S A *FAN*.

YOU CAN *SEE*, CAN'T YOU? AS LONG AS HE CAN USE YOUR *MOTHER* TO *MAKE* YOU WORK FOR HIM...

...AND IF THE *FAMILY* AND THEIR *THINGS* ARE THE *FETISH*--

THE *COLLECTION* WON'T BE *COMPLETE* AFTER THE TIARA.

YOU ALL *KNOW* WHAT WE HAVE TO *DO*.

LIKE IN *AMSTERDAM*? DO YOU THINK WE HAVE *TIME*?

RIGHT. FIRST THINGS *FIRST*. WHICH *I.D.* DO YOU WANT TO *TRAVEL* UNDER?

SADIE HOPKIRK IS CLEAN.

'KAY, SADIE. I'VE GOT YOU IN *AND* OUT *WITHIN* THE SEVEN DAYS, DEPARTING IN *TWENTY* HOURS-- WINDOW OR AISLE?-- *THAT* GIVES YOU...

"...A LITTLE UNDER THREE DAYS IN ROMANIA."

BUCURESTI

--ABLE TO MAKE CONTACT WITH THAT GUARD AND GET WHAT YOU NEED?

LAST NIGHT. OLD WING'S UNCHANGED SINCE I WAS HERE LAST.

NEW WING HAS A HAMPF-MULLER SYSTEM WITH SOMETHING THE GUARD CALLED A POINT-PRESSURE RELAY, PLUS THERMAL AND ULTRAVIOLET ISOLATION.

GIVE US A SECOND TO LOOK INTO THAT. ANY PLANS YET FOR EGRESS?

I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING. I ALWAYS DO.

EU TE VA PLATI OPTZEKI EURO PENTRU ASTA.

SALBATIC. NOUAZEKI.

OKAY, WE'LL NEED SOME DETAILS FROM INSIDE, BUT WE THINK WE'VE GOT IT.

YOU'RE GONNA NEED THE PLEOCHROME FABRIC TAMI GAVE YOU...

...AND AFTER YOUR NEXT WALK-THROUGH, KYOKO'LL GIVE YOU A SHOPPING LIST.

GUYS? I MAY HAVE A LITTLE PROBLEM HERE.

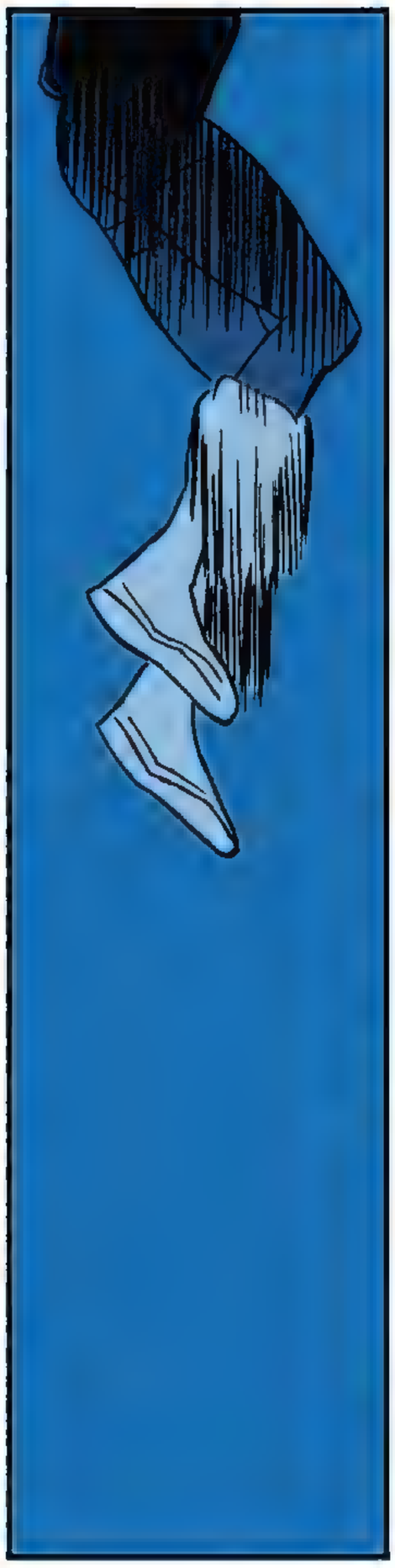
COTETUL CAINILOR

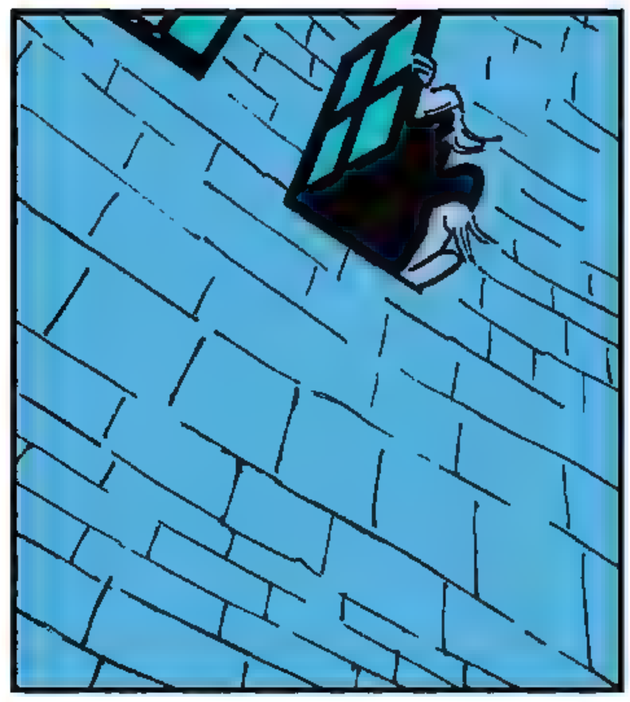
DEEEEEEE

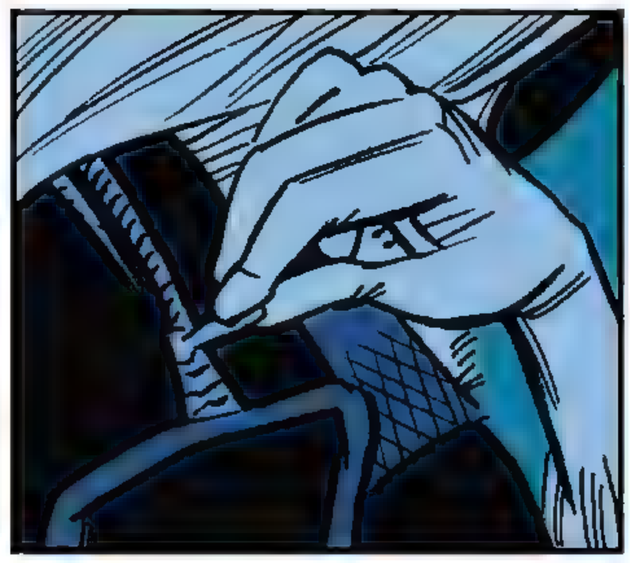
EEEEETDEEEEEEEEEEEEEETDEEEEEEEE

EETDEEEEEEEEEEEEEETDEEEEEEEEEE

EETDEEEEEE







WELCOME *HOME*, MISS HOPKIRK. THANKS FOR YOUR *PATIENCE*.

"DON'T *TELL* ME YOU CARRIED IT *ON!* THEY X-RAY *EVERYTHING* NOW!"

I *TOLD* YOU I'D *THINK* OF SOMETHING.

FIRST, I THOUGHT OF BECOMING A *SCULPTOR*.

AND *THEN* I THOUGHT OF *LEAD*-BASED GLAZES.

BUT YOU HAD TO FIRE THE *CLAY*, AND THEN *AGAIN--!*

SHE'S *FINE*, SEE?

NOPE. *PLASTER* DIPPED IN LEAD PAINT, *ACRYLICS* AND LACQUER OVER THAT.

TIME TO MAKE THE *CALL?*

HOW ARE *YOU* DOING?

SIX DAYS WITH *ACCESS* TO THE *WORKSHOP* HERE-- I'M *OKAY*.

THEN IT'S *TIME*.

I HAVE IT.

GOOD. BRING IT--

NOT SO FAST. PUT HER ON SPEAKERPHONE.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MOM?

I--YES, YES, I'M FINE.

HE'S GOING TO TELL US WHERE YOU ARE NOW, AND I'LL TELL HIM WHERE TO GO FOR THE TIARA AND THE EGG.

THEN YOU AND I CAN TALK FOR A WHILE. NICE AND EASY.

NO. WHAT ASSURANCE DO I HAVE THAT THEY'LL BE THERE? THAT THEY AREN'T FAKES?

WHAT ASSURANCE DO I HAVE THAT YOU'LL GIVE ME THE RIGHT LOCATION?

YOU WANT THESE THINGS OR NOT?

TWO-NINE-ONE-SEVEN HOLBROOK, WOODHURST, BY THE AIRPORT.

FINE. SIR WALTER SCOTT IN CENTRAL PARK. THERE'S A LOOSE STONE BELOW HIS FOOT.

YOUR MOTHER WILL BE FASTENED TO AN EXPLOSIVE DEVICE FOR WHICH I HAVE THE TRANSMITTER...

"...IF I AM ATTACKED OR SUSPECT I AM FOLLOWED, SHE DIES."

HE'S GONE.

GOOD. HAVE YOU SEEN ANYONE ELSE--?

NO, ONLY HIM. I HEAR OTHER PEOPLE, LIKE IN AN APARTMENT BUILDING, BUT I'VE BEEN AFRAID TO SHOUT. WHAT IF-- THEY'RE WITH HIM?

AND FELICIA... I DON'T THINK HE GAVE YOU THE RIGHT ADDRESS. I HAVEN'T HEARD PLANES--

RAMIRO'S HOUSE & OFFICE REMOVALS

GOOD, MOM. CLEAR THINKING. I'M CHECKING ANYWAY, BUT I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT...

"...HE'LL TRY TO HOLD YOU BACK, TO MAKE ME STEAL SOMETHING ELSE.

"I DON'T LIKE IT, BUT YOU'RE SAFE FOR NOW. HE'LL WANT TO KEEP YOU ALIVE--"

UNTIL HE'S GOT EVERYTHING HE'S AFTER?

UNTIL WE CAN TURN THIS AROUND ON HIM AND GET YOU OUT OF THERE.

YOU'RE NOT WORKING ALONE?

NO. I'VE GOT PEOPLE. GOOD PEOPLE. JUST HANG ON, LIKE YOU'VE BEEN DOING, AND IT'LL BE OKAY.

RAMIRO'S HOUSE & OFFICE REMOVALS

"WHAT'S THAT WHOOSHING NOISE?"

"IT'S WIND, MOM. I'M DOING ABOUT SIXTY..."

...ON THE ROOF OF AN EASTBOUND SEMI.

THE *THINGS* YOU *DO*...I SEE YOU ON THE *NEWS* SOMETIMES.

LIKE WHEN YOU WERE *KISSING* THAT-- THAT--

GUY, MOM. HE'S A *DECENT* GUY, IN A FUNNY SUIT, DOING WHAT HE *HAS* TO DO.

BAR

I THOUGHT THAT ABOUT YOUR FATHER...THAT IT WAS *WHAT HE HAD TO DO.*

BAR

YEAH?

BAD ADBY. HE PIK-UP?

GAS

BUT IT *WASN'T*, YOU KNOW. HE WAS A *SMART* MAN. AND WE DIDN'T LIVE ANY BETTER THAN WE WOULD HAVE ON REGULAR SALARY. HE STOLE...

"...BECAUSE HE *WANTED* TO. IT WAS A *SELFISH* PASSION."

"I UNDERSTAND."

TRK/ON

SRCH: FOCUS

ME? OR HIM?

HAS BOX. LVING NOW. DIDN'T SEE XMITTER.

BOTH. I UNDERSTAND HIS *PASSION*...

...AND I *THINK* I UNDERSTAND YOUR *RESENTMENT* OF IT. HE WAS *CHEATING* ON YOU *ALL* THE TIME...

POET SAYS BLOCKED LANDLINE. NO LOCK ON MOM. ??

...AND IT WAS WITH *STUFF*. NOT EVEN ANOTHER *PERSON*.

THAT'S EXACTLY IT. AND THAT'S WHY I--

HANG ON A SEC, MOM--HE'S *HERE*.

SORRY, MOM--GOTTA *ASK* YOU SOMETHING *NOW*--

DO YOU *TRUST* ME? NOT AS A *DAUGHTER.* AS A *THIEF.*

AS A THIEF WHO *REALLY* HATES THIS GUY *MESSING* WITH ME AND *MINE.*

DO I *TRUST* THAT YOU'RE LIKE YOUR *FATHER,* YOU MEAN? OF COURSE.

GOOD. HE'S ON HIS WAY *BACK* TO YOU...

SHE'S *INSIDE* YOUR *STORAGE* UNIT RIGHT *NOW...*

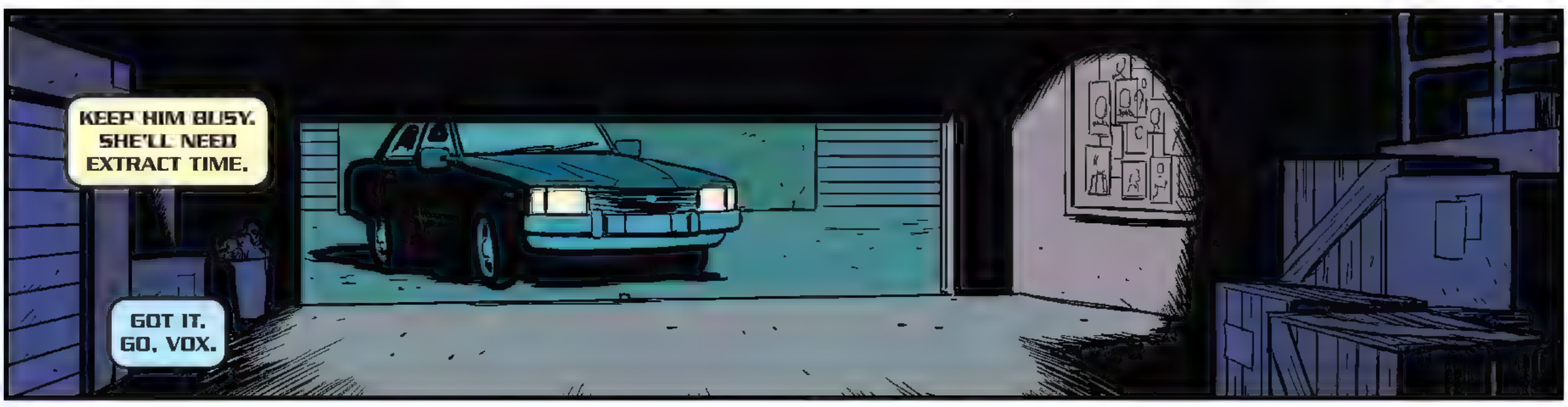
...AND SHE *KNOWS* YOU STILL NEED THE *SWORD.*

MATT HOLLINGSWORTH
w/ JAVIER RODRIGUEZ, pgs. 11-18
COLOR ART

VC'S JOE CARAMAGNA
LETTERS

JEN VAN METER
WRITER

JAVIER RODRIGUEZ
w/ JAVIER PULIDO, pgs. 18-22
ARTIST



...BUT *SHE* CAN'T BE MORE THAN *FIFTEEN*, TOPS.

GIVE ME THAT! NO ONE *TOUCHES* ANA! *NO* ONE!

WHO IS *SHE?* GOT HER *LOCKED* UP WITH MY *MOM?*

BE *VERY* GLAD YOU'RE *WRONG...*

...YOU HAVE *NO* IDEA--

KYOKO'S NEARLY THERE...

...KEEP *STALLING.*

OH, I'VE GOT A GREAT IDEA...

...I PUT *YOU* OUT OF *MY* MISERY--AND *THEIRS*-- RIGHT *NOW*.

WON'T TAKE ME *LONG* TO FIND *MOM* ONCE *YOU'RE* OUT OF THE WAY.

DON'T COME ANY *CLOSER*--IF YOU WANT YOUR *MOTHER* TO *LIVE*.

HAD YOU FORGOTTEN *THIS?*

NO, AND IT'S *NICE*...

...BUT WE'LL GET *MORE* FOR THE *PAIR* AT *AUCTION*.

YOU RECOGNIZE THE *DET* CORD? IT'S *YOURS.*

FRAGILE

NEVER STORE YOUR *TACKLE* IN WITH THE *FISH*. ANY *PRO* KNOWS *THAT*.

ONLY TOOK ME *TEN* MINUTES TO RIG THE WHOLE *MESS*.

YOU *DON'T* WANT TO PLAY *CHICKEN* WITH ME. I *WILL* WIN.

ARE YOU *CERTAIN?* YOUR MOTHER IS *NOTHING* TO *ME*...

...BUT COULD YOU *REALLY* DESTROY THE *TREASURES* IN *THERE?*

WE'VE GOT A PROBLEM HERE, CHIEF...

...HE'S HOLDING HER *INSIDE* THE *KRAVEN* ESTATE.

I'M A *MECHANIC*. NO *WAY* CAN I DO THIS *ALONE*.

JUST *GET* ME THE SWORD, AND WE CAN *END* THIS.

DO ANY OF YOU REMEMBER *FLEMING*...

...HOW HE GOT THE *BOTTICELLIS* IN *EIGHTY-TWO*?

IT'S *TRICKY*, BUT WE COULD SET IT UP *FAST*. YOU *IN*, KYOKO?

OF *COURSE* I'M *IN*. WOULDN'T *MISS* IT.

THE SWORD'S IN *STORAGE* BELOW THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM.

I *CAN'T* DO IT *ALONE*.

SO *YOU'LL* HAVE TO *HELP*.

GO LOOK AFTER MY *MOM*--I'LL *CALL* YOU. BUT *REMEMBER*...

...PEOPLE WHO *MESS* WITH ME SOMETIMES HAVE *VERY* BAD LUCK.

AND I'M ONE *HELL* OF A *PICKPOCKET*.

"THINK HE BOUGHT IT?"

DUNNO. IF HE *DID*, HE'LL PROBABLY RIG A WHOLE *NEW* SET-UP ON HER.

BUT IT KEEPS HIS MIND ON THE *STRENGTH* OF *HIS* POSITION...

...AND *OFF* THE WEAKNESSES OF *MINE*.

YOU MEAN YOU *WOULDN'T* BLOW UP THE *GOODS* JUST TO MAKE A *POINT?*

I *MEAN*, I *COULDN'T*. HIS *COMPONENTS* ARE ALL THIS YEAR'S *PÜRN-CZYKKI*, AND I DON'T HAVE THOSE *SPECS* DOWN TOO WELL.

SHOULD HAVE HAD KYOKO TALK YOU THROUGH IT.

SHE WAS BUSY, AND IT WAS A CONTINGENCY BLUFF--I WAS JUST STALLING, REMEMBER?

SHAKE THE *TONE*, BOSS. IT'LL BE *OKAY*. WE'LL *GET* YOUR MOM BACK.

WE HIT A LITTLE *SNAG*, WE'RE COMING AT IT FROM ANOTHER *ANGLE* IS ALL.

I'M *NOT* A HUGE *FAN* OF THE *ANGLE*.

FLEMING LOST TWO PEOPLE GETTING THE *BOTTICELLIS*, YOU KNOW.

HOW IS THE GLOVE *FEELING?* THE SEAMS MIGHT BE STIFF, UNDER THE ARMS.

IT'S *FINE*, TAMI. *FULL* RANGE.

I SHOULD *CALL* HIM. ISN'T IT *TIME?*

GIVE IT A FEW MINUTES...

"...GPS SAYS HE ONLY *JUST* GOT BACK."

MISS ANASTASIA, GOOD MORNING--!

IT *IS*, VASILI. BUT *TOMORROW* WILL BE BETTER, STILL.

YOU'LL SEE. ONCE IT *BEGINS*... *EVERYTHING* WILL BE... *RIGHT.*

HOLOPKOV. A WORD?

WHAT *IS* IT?

THE *COOK* COMPLAINED TO *ME* ABOUT YOUR LADY FRIEND'S *SINGING.*

I'M DOING YOU THE *FAVOR* OF A *WARNING.* AS YOU *KNOW*...

"...THE MISTRESS *FROWNS* ON GUESTS IN THE *STAFF* QUARTERS."

SOAP

YOUR *STUPID* MOTHER WAS *SINGING!* TO CALM HER *NERVES*, SHE SAYS!

I HADN'T *WANTED* TO *GAG* HER--

I WANT THIS *DONE*-- THE *SWORD*, THE *OTHER* THINGS, *ALL* OF IT--

DELIVERABLE, FIRST THING *TOMORROW.* UNDERSTAND?

FELICIA...?

...I'M FRIGHTENED. I DON'T WANT TO BE, BUT I AM.

I KNOW, MOM. BUT I'M DOING WHAT HE WANTS. IT'LL BE OKAY.

HE'S CHANGED DEMANDS, SO I'LL CALL OR TEXT WHEN I'VE SORTED IT OUT.

JUST HAVE FAITH. I'M LESS LIKE DAD THAN YOU THINK.

INTERCEPT'S SET UP. AND WE CAN USE THE SCHEDULE CHANGE. NICE.

WHY? WHAT DOES HE NEED TO MOVE IT UP FOR?

HE'S GETTING ANTSY. KEEPING A HOSTAGE IS HARD WORK...

...AND HE'S NOT SUPPOSED TO HAVE HER.

HE'S AN INSIDER, HOLDING A HOSTAGE IN THEIR HOUSE, BUT THEY DON'T KNOW IT--?

THAT'S WHY HE WAS SO UPSET ABOUT HER SINGING.

'KAY, SO SAY HE GETS CAUGHT, THEN... WHAT?

THEN HE'S KILLED, I'D IMAGINE. THEY APPEAR TO BE RUTHLESS. OR, PERHAPS...

...IF HE CAN NO LONGER MAKE THE CAT GET THE SWORD--THE COLLECTION'S MISSING A TROPHY, AND HE FAILS...

THE SWORD ISN'T THE TROPHY-- NONE OF THESE THINGS ARE.

IT'S HER.

...USE *THIS* TO TEXT HIM THE *DRILL*-- HE'LL THINK IT'S FROM *ME*.

I'LL BE BACK IN AN *HOUR* TO HELP GET EVERYTHING *READY*.

HEY, KID. SHOULDN'T YOU BE IN *SCHOOL?*

HEY, LADY. SHOULDN'T *YOU* BE IN *JAIL?*

HE HASN'T BEEN BY IN A COUPLE *DAYS*. IF YOU WERE *WONDERING*.

CAME ACROSS A NEW MODEL OF COP LOCK. CAN YOU USE IT?

AND CAN YOU HANG ON TO *THIS?*

YEAH, SURE--*ANYTHING*. THIS IS *SWEET*. THANKS.

GIVE IT TO *HIM* IF--YOU KNOW--SOMETHING *HAPPENS* TO ME?

I LOOK LIKE A *MAILMAN?* DO IT *YOURSELF*.

HEY, SPIDER WAIT UP!

EVERYTHING THAT'S BEEN GOING ON? I CAN *EXPLAIN*--

I *THOUGHT* THIS GUY WAS TRYING TO *TRAP* ME, MAYBE TO GET *YOU*, BUT--

SEE ME *GOING* SOMEWHERE? CAN IT *KEEP?*

THERE'S THIS GIRL, *ANA*... IT ISN'T ANYTHING TO *DO* WITH *YOU*.

YOU SAID THAT *BEFORE*. I *GET* IT.

BUT I WAS *LYING*. I *THOUGHT*-- LOOK, I *NEED* TO--

DON'T. JUST *DON'T*, OKAY?

I'VE *ALREADY* GOT THE *FLU*.

DON'T THINK I CAN *HANDLE* ANY *MORE* BAD LUCK RIGHT NOW.

"YOU'VE NO *BUSINESS* KEEPING ME IN THE *DARK*..."

...WHY DIDN'T YOU *TELL* ME ABOUT THIS *BEFORE?*

A JOB LIKE *THIS*--PLANNED AND EXECUTED IN UNDER A DAY--YOU THINK I HAD *TIME* TO GET YOU EVERY *DETAIL?*

THESE ARE THE *PAPERS* YOU'LL NEED. YOU PARK YOUR *CAR* WHERE I *TOLD* YOU?

YES.

KLATTER VRRRRRRRM CLANK

GOOD. WHEN I *SAY*, YOU'LL BRING IT AROUND TO THE EAST DRIVE *ACCESS* ROAD.

SOUNDS LIKE YOUR *VAN'S* HERE--

TAKE *EVERYTHING*. YOU *CAN'T* COME *BACK*.

YOU-- WHERE DID YOU PUT THE *EXPLOSIVES?*

THIS WOULDN'T DO ME MUCH GOOD IF I *TOLD* YOU.

IF YOU *BEHAVE* LIKE A GENTLEMAN, IT WON'T *MATTER*.

EVENING. YOU HOLOPKOV? WHERE YOU NEED US TO *START?*

IT *ALL* GOES. THIS ONE *LAST*. AND *PLEASE* BE CAREFUL...

"...*EVERYTHING* HERE, WELL--IT'S MY WHOLE *LIFE*."

KID, NEXT TIME THERE'S A *DELAY*, YOU GOTTA CALL *AHEAD*. NOT MANY OF US *NIGHT* GUYS HERE AT THE MUSEUM ARE *CLEARED* FOR RECEIVABLES.

LOOKS LIKE EVERYTHING'S IN *ORDER*, THOUGH--

HAVE A GOOD ONE!

PARK AT *THIS* ADDRESS AND WAIT. IT MAY *BE* A WHILE.

I'LL *CALL* YOU WHEN I'M *READY*.

WHATEVER YOU SAY, MAN. YOU'RE PAYING BY THE *HOUR*.

FLOC

--YOU READING ME? I'M IN. LOOKS CLEAR.

METALS ARE STORED IN THE SOUTH VAULT. GONNA RUN A BYPASS ON THE HUMIDITY CONTROL.

THIS IS TAKING MUCH LONGER...

...THAN I EXPECTED. YOU SAID--

I SAID WE'D BE CLEAR BEFORE CURATORIAL STAFF COMES IN...

...AND WE WILL. NOW SHUT UP AND LET ME DO MY JOB.

GONNA PUT YOU DOWN FOR A MINUTE. JUST HOLD TIGHT.

AC/VENT FILTRATION SOUTH

...

ARE YOU THERE?

WHAT'S TAKING SO LONG?

OKAY, KEEP YOUR PANTS ON. I'M BACK.

HEADING *DOWN* NOW.

STORAGE BAY'S STILL *CLEAR*--

--ON MY WAY TO THE SOUTH VAULT.

FOR HOLOPKOV, HUNH? YOU'LL WANT TO *PARK* TO THE *SIDE* OVER THERE, TAKE IT 'ROUND *BACK* TO THE *SERVICE* ENTRANCE.

AND *TRY* TO KEEP IT DOWN. FAMILY LIKES IT QUIET THIS EARLY.

YEAH, MISTER KENIN? SENDING A *DELIVERY* ROUND FOR *HOLOPKOV*. *SAYS* HE'LL NEED TO *SIGN?*

MISTER HOLOPKOV IS EITHER *OUT* OR NOT YET *AWAKE.*

I *CAN'T* ALLOW YOU TO BRING *ANYTHING* INTO THE RESIDENCE UNTIL I'VE *SPOKEN* WITH HIM.

FELLAS? COME WITH *ME*-- TRYING TO GET YOUR *GUY* ON THE *PHONE*--

PLEASE DON'T LEAVE *THAT* WHERE IT WILL BLOCK THE *PATH.*

THIS GONNA TAKE *LONG?* WE GOT A *PICK-UP* IN POUGHKEEPSIE AT *NOON.*

IT WILL *TAKE* AS LONG AS IT *TAKES.* THIS *DELIVERY* WAS *NOT* AUTHORIZED--

I'M *SURE* WE CAN SORT IT OUT...

"...PROBABLY JUST A CROSSED *WIRE* SOMEWHERE."

OH MY GOD! THIS IS *SO* INTENSE!

CROSSING THE *WIRES* TO BYPASS THE *CARD-READER*, AND...BINGO. NOW--

SOMEONE'S TRYING TO CALL ME...

FRAGILE

...HOLD *ON* WHILE I--

BZZZZ BZZZZ

NO CAN DO. I NEED YOU.

READ ME THE SECOND OF THE CODE STRINGS I HAD YOU TAKE DOWN.

INCOMING CALL: HOUSEKEEPING

ACCEPT IGNORE

BLACK CAT

EFF-EFF-SIX-TWO-TWO-DASH-SEVEN-NINE-SLASH-EIGHT.

BVVVT

GOOD. NOW...WE'RE *ALMOST* THERE--

GOT IT. JUST GOT TO GET *BACK* THROUGH THE MAIN *VAULT* DOORS, AND...

$#@%! *CODES* WERE CHANGED! COME AROUND *NOW*-- YOU *HEAR* ME? *NOW!*

POP YOUR *TRUNK* WHEN YOU'RE IN *POSITION*-- HURRY!

QUICK-- WE DON'T WANT ANYONE TO MAKE YOUR CAR!

WHEN WE'RE CLEAR, PULL OVER, AND I'LL--

YOU'LL STAY RIGHT THERE.

SPAK!

I'M ON MY WAY. YOU'RE WHERE I TOLD YOU?

YEAH, THE ESTATE? NICE PLACE. LISTEN--

IDIOT! YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO WAIT AT THE NORTH END OF THE PARK!

OH, YOU MEAN THIS SCRIBBLE ON THE OTHER SIDE? YEAH--COULDN'T MAKE IT OUT.

ANYWAYS, WE'RE HERE NOW, AND YOU'RE GONNA WANNA HAUL ASS...

"...EVERYONE HERE'S ALL BENT OUT OF SHAPE."

LOOK, MA'AM, IT'S MY MISTAKE, LIKE I SAID, AND I'M SORRY.

YOU WANT, I'LL LOAD IT ALL UP AND WAIT FOR HOLOPKOV OUTSIDE THE GATES THERE--

WHAT I WANT IS TO BE TOLD WHO ALLOWED THIS ON MY PROPERTY!

LEBEDEV DIDN'T HAVE A PROTOCOL FOR THIS, MADAM KRAVINOFF.

NONE OF THE STAFF HAS EVER BEFORE DARED--

ALL OF IT, BACK ON THE TRUCK. ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?

DON'T BE A FOOL, ALY, IT CAN WAIT!-- YOU STAY HERE.

HOPE YOU CAN SORT THIS OUT, MAN. HER LADYSHIP AIN'T HAPPY.

HOLOPKOV! WHAT IS THE MEANING OF ALL THIS?

ANA TELLS ME IT IS EXPECTED, BUT CAN'T SAY MORE, AND TODAY OF ALL DAYS, I AM IN NO MOOD TO TOLERATE THIS RIDICULOUS--

IF YOU'LL JUST LET ME SHOW YOU--

19 NEW YORK B

YOU DARE IMPOSE FURTHER--?

PLEASE, MADAME KRAVENOVA, ANA'S TOLD ME TODAY IS VERY SPECIAL TO YOU ALL, AND I WANTED TO HONOR THAT...

...TO BRING YOU *THIS.*

TAKEN IN *BATTLE* FROM EMPEROR PETER THE THIRD BY THE SECOND ARCHDUKE *KRAVINOFF.*

AND THE *REST*, EVERYTHING ON THAT *VAN*-- THE FAMILY *TREASURES...*

...EVERYTHING FROM MY GRANDMOTHER'S *LEDGER*, RESTORED AT *LAST...*

...JUST AS YOU ONCE WISHED.

AND THERE'S ONE THING *MORE.*

IT'S NO *SECRET* HOW *DEEPLY* YOU DESPISE THE *SPIDER-MAN*, MADAME, SO WHEN I SAW THE *OPPORTUNITY...*

...I GOT THIS FOR YOU AS *WELL.*

AN... *INTERESTING* GIFT. I IMAGINE IT *WOULD* CAUSE HIM *PAIN* TO SEE HER *SUFFER.*

HEY, NOW! *EVERYONE* HOLD ON JUST *ONE* DAMN *SECOND!* I AM *NOT*--

SMACK!

CURIOUS. I WONDER WHAT IT *IS* HE *SEES* IN *YOU...?*

...BESIDES THE *OBVIOUS.*

AW ♯#*%, LADY! WHAT THE *HELL IS* THIS *FREAK-SHOW?*

DUDE *SAID* I'D BE, LIKE-- LIKE JUMPING OUT OF A *CAKE* OR SOMETHING!

MADAME KRAVENOVA, PLEASE, *NO!* I DON'T *UNDERSTAND*--DON'T KNOW *HOW*, HOW *SHE*--

WHAT ARE YOU *PLAYING* AT, HOLOPKOV!? YOU *DARE* MOCK *ME* WITH--

--WITH *THIS!?*

#*@%, LADY!

INNOCENT PARTY HERE! I--

--HEY, IS THIS THING *SUPPOSED* TO BE *BLUNT?*

WHAT-- WHAT HAS SHE *DONE* TO ME?

YOU! *YOU'RE* A *PART* OF IT! WHAT *IS* THAT *%#$ UP TO!?

WHOA! *WATCH* IT, FELLA--DON'T DRAG *US* INTO THIS MESS!

YOU CALLED *ME*, REMEMBER?

YOU *SHAME* YOURSELF WITH *MORE* LIES, *COWARD*--!

EVEN A *FOOL* KNOWS THE *CAT* WORKS *ALONE!*

DON'T DO ANYTHING *STUPID.*

LIKE TAKING ANOTHER *JOB* FROM THAT *PSYCHO?*

LIKE MOUTHING OFF TO *ANYONE* IN THIS *FAMILY.* OR *RUNNING.*

IT *CAN'T* BE! I...I-- *HOW?*

OH *GOD*, NO-- FIVE *YEARS*, EVERYTHING... *NO!*

DID YOU *IMAGINE* YOU COULD UNDO YOUR *FATHER'S* BETRAYAL BY COMPOUNDING IT...?!

...JOIN HIM IN *HELL*, DOG!

WHAT IF HE'S TELLING THE *TRUTH*, MAMA?

IF THE *REAL* CAT *IS* PLAYING A GAME WITH US, WHAT *IS* IT...?

"...AND WHERE *IS* SHE?"

OH, *FELICIA!* I'VE BEEN HEARING A *COMMOTION,* AND I *THOUGHT--*

IT'S GOING TO BE *OKAY,* MOM. *TRY* WORKING YOUR *LEGS* A LITTLE *NOW--*

--WE'LL BE MOVING *FAST* ONCE I'VE CUT YOU *LOOSE.*

SO, UM-- MOM...

...YOU *REMEMBER* THE OTHER *NIGHT,* HOW YOU *SAID* YOU *TRUST* ME?

OF *COURSE.* WHY?

OH, NO *REASON...*

ARMED

DISARMED

The Kravinoff Mansion. Upstate New York.

--BUT IF THESE *KRAVEN* PEOPLE DON'T *WANT* ME HERE, WHY IS GETTING ME *OUT* SO *COMPLICATED?* CAN'T I JUST *LEAVE?*

THEY'RE *KILLERS*, MOM. UP TO SOMETHING *NASTY*. WHEN SIDOROV *KIDNAPPED* YOU AND BROUGHT YOU *HERE*...

...HE MADE *YOU* A POTENTIAL *THREAT* TO THEM *AND* THEIR PLANS.

SO *FIRST*, WE GET YOU OUT AS *SAFELY* AS POSSIBLE...

...*THEN* WE MAKE *SURE* SIDOROV GETS SOME *PAYBACK*, GET SOME INTEL ON THE *KRAVENS'* PLAN IF WE'RE *LUCKY*.

GOT IT. HAVE YOU LOOSE IN A *SECOND*, NOW.

HOW MUCH *TIME* DO WE HAVE? YOU *SAID* YOUR *FRIENDS* WOULD BE--

MY FRIENDS ARE OUT *FRONT* RIGHT *NOW*, WAITING FOR MY *SIGNAL*.

KYOKO TRADED PLACES WITH *ME* AT THE *MUSEUM* TO KEEP SIDOROV DISTRACTED. BY NOW, SHE'S WORKING A STORY TO DISCREDIT HIM.

BYRON AND *TAMI* ARE POSING AS *MOVERS*. THEY SWAPPED IN *FAKES* OF SIDOROV'S COLLECTION AND BROUGHT THEM-- AND *ME*--HERE.

AREN'T *THEY* IN A GREAT DEAL OF *DANGER?*

THEY *ARE*. BUT DON'T WORRY. THEY *KNOW* WHAT THEY'RE *DOING*.

AND THEY KNOW I'M HERE, AND WHAT *I'M* DOING...

...WHICH PUTS THEM *WAY* AHEAD OF THE KRAVENS, AND SIDOROV.

MY NAME IS VASILI HOLPKIN SIDOROV. FOR CENTURIES MY FAMILY HAS SERVED HOUSE KRAVINOFF-- HOUSEKEEPERS. GUARDS. TUTORS. VALETS.

TINY BIRDS CLEANING THE TEETH OF CROCODILES, WE HAVE KEPT OURSELVES SAFE BY KNOWING OUR PLACE.

I FORGOT MINE.

KRAVINOFF TREASURES, SCATTERED BY HISTORY. I WOULD STEAL THEM ALL BACK.

LIKE JACK CLIMBING THE BEANSTALK, LIKE ALADDIN, I WOULD BE ELEVATED BY PRINCELY ADVENTURE. AND RECEIVE A PRINCE'S REWARD.

WHEN THE LAST FEW PRIZES ELUDED MY TALENTS, I FORCED A MAGICAL CREATURE TO STEAL THEM FOR ME...

...AND SHE BROUGHT ME WHAT I NEEDED. I WAS SO CLOSE.

BUT, MAMAN! *WHY* WOULD VASILI *DARE* INSULT US WITH THESE *FAKES?*

HIS *FATHER* MADE A *SHAMEFUL* ERROR OF JUDGMENT ONCE...*PERHAPS* THE BLOODLINE GROWS *WEAK-MINDED!*

BUT NOW, AT THE MOMENT OF MY TRIUMPH, MY LUCK HAS TURNED SOUR. THE QUEEN ACCUSES ME OF TREACHERY. IMPS HAVE STOLEN MY TREASURE.

AND THE *GENIE...*

Black Cat: The Trophy Hunters Part Four

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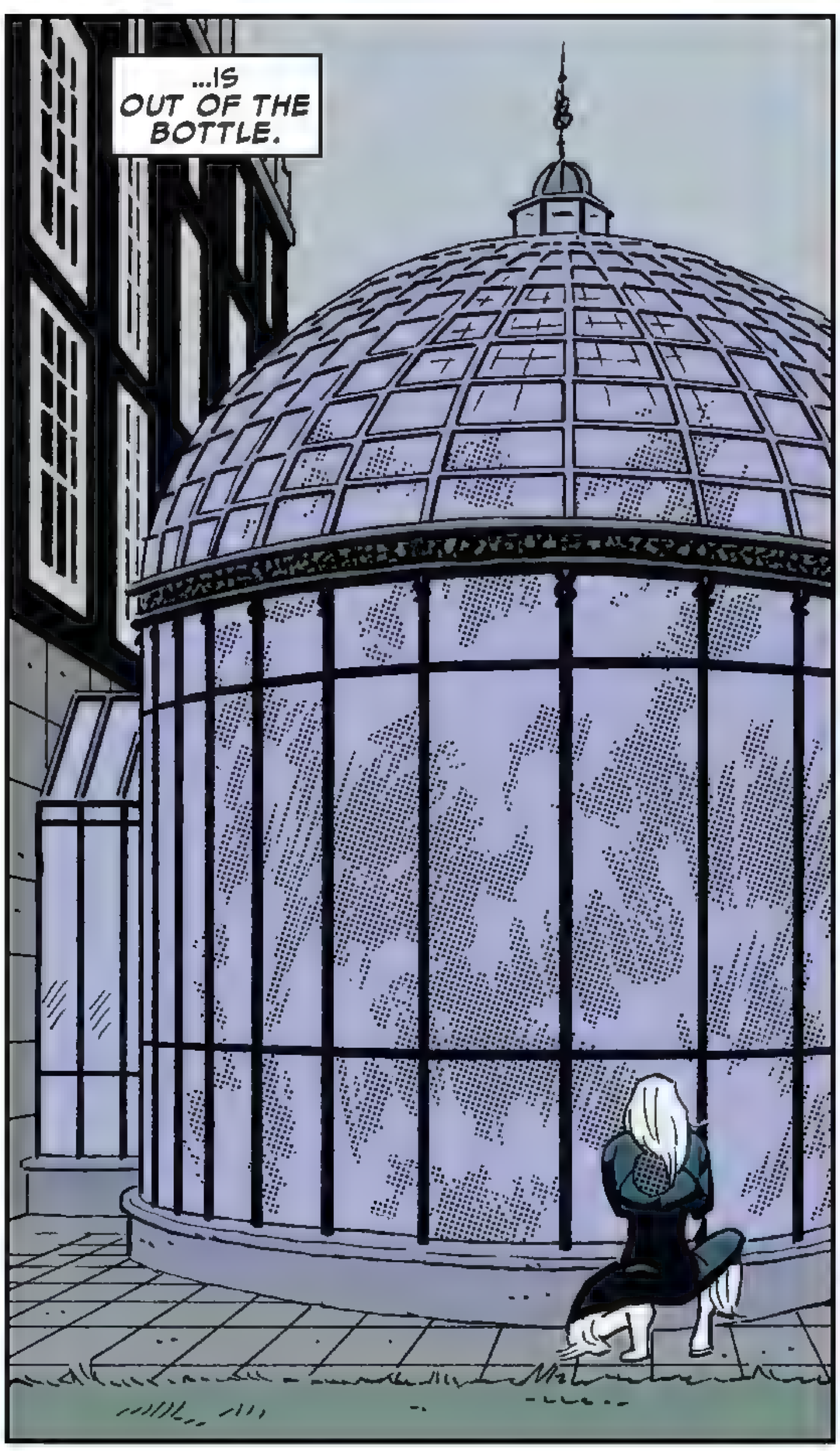


SORRY--MY DISPATCHER. I GOTTA--

WHO IS THIS?

ER--UH-- MARSHA *FLYNN?* DISPATCH FOR ATTA-BOY *MOVERS?* I'M TRYING TO REACH MY *DRIVER?* OR HIS *ASSISTANT?* HE'S GOT A *PICKUP* IN--

SEND A *DIFFERENT* TEAM TO *POUGHKEEPSIE,* THEN...

...THESE TWO, AND THEIR *VAN,* WILL BE HERE *ALL DAY* IF NECESSARY.

ALL *DAY?!* *OH* NO! I'VE GOT A BACHELOR PARTY AT *SIX...*

...AND *THAT'S* A MONTH'S *RENT!* SHOULD'A *KNOWN* THIS GIG WAS WRONG, THE WAY *HE* WAS GOING ON ABOUT BIG *PLANS* AND--

WHAT?! WHAT *PLANS* DID HE TELL *YOU* ABOUT, TRAMP?

YOU'RE WORKING WITH THE *CAT!* I *KNOW* YOU ARE! ONE MORE *LIE* AND I'LL *DO* IT--I'LL *USE* THIS!

GET *OUT* OF MY *FACE*, WACK JOB! *YOU* CAN'T *SCARE* ME--

--*NOT* WITH A #*%& *GARAGE-DOOR* OPENER!

BOOOM

ANA! ALY! GET TO THE *DEN!* NOTHING MUST *HARM* THE WEAVER!

OHMU*GOD* ITWAS*REAL* OHMU*GOD*...

YOU *KNEW* WHAT WOULD HAPPEN, $#*%! IS SHE IN MY *ROOMS?* IS SHE WITH THE OLD *WOMAN?*

I DUNNO WHAT YOU'RE *TALKING* ABOUT! *WHAT* OLD *WOMAN?* PLEASE, I *JUST* WANNA GO *HOME*--

YOUR ROOMS?! YOU *INTERFERING PEASANT*--*WHAT* HAVE YOU *DONE?!*

COME WITH *ME!* THE *REST* OF YOU *GET* ALL *THIS*--

--THIS *GARBAGE*-- OUT OF MY *SIGHT!*

DON'T *NEED* TO TELL ME *TWICE*, MA'AM.

HOPE THE *PAY'S* GOOD, BUDDY-- CUZ' YOUR *BOSS*...

"...*SHE'S* A PIECE A' *WORK.*"

YOU MUST BE MADAME KRAVINOFF.

SORRY ABOUT THE *MESS*, BUT YOUR *GUY* HERE *KILLED* MY *FRIEND* AND *KIDNAPPED* MY *MOTHER*.

I JUST *HAD* TO MEET THE WOMAN HE WAS *DOING* IT *FOR*...

...BUT HE WASN'T REALLY DOING IT FOR YOU.

HE'S BEEN *OBSESSING* OVER HER FOR *YEARS*.

I GUESS HE THOUGHT YOU'D *TRADE* HER FOR ALL THAT *STUFF*--MAYBE LET HIM *MARRY* HER...?

KIND OF *DISTURBING*, IF YOU ASK *ME*.

I SHOULD HAVE *SEEN* IT, THE WAY YOU HOVER AND *CRINGE*--

--DISGUSTING *DOG*! *GENERATIONS* OF *TRUSTED* SERVICE--!

--THE *SIDOROV* NAME *MEANT* LOYALTY--!

--UCLK--

I CAN'T LET YOU *KILL* HIM, LADY.

I REALLY *THOUGHT* I COULD...

...BUT IT TURNS *OUT* I'M *GROWING* AS A *PERSON.*

YOU DARE--?!

YEAH, I *DO.* I *DARE.*

KINDA MY WHOLE *ACT,* REALLY.

THAT'S FOR YOUR *INSOLENCE...*

WHAT'S THE *KNIFE* FOR? I *BLASPHEME*, TOO?

HOW DID THE SPYDER *KNOW* TO *SEND* YOU?

WHA--? YOU *MEAN*--

OH. NO-- HIM AND ME ARE *OVER.* HE'S *WAY* TOO *CLINGY.* HEH.

YOU'RE *LYING.* YOU ARE NOT WORKING *FOR* OR *WITH* HIM--

--*YET* YOU ARRIVE *TODAY*, DISRUPTING A PLAN *YEARS* IN THE *MAKING?*

MY BAD LUCK. OR *YOURS*--TAKE YOUR *PICK.*

KUNK

I'LL LINE *HIS* COFFIN WITH *YOUR* SKIN.

THUNK

BAM

THE WEB-*WEAVER*--SHE *SPOKE!* TO ALY AND ME.

SHE *MUMBLED* ABOUT US *BEGINNING* RIGHT AWAY, AND ABOUT *HIM* BEING *WARNED*--

YOUR *WEDDING* RING, MAMAN! WHAT'S *HAPPENED* TO IT?

CALL THE *GATEHOUSE* AND TELL THEM TO *STOP* THAT *VAN.*

THEN GET YOUR *BROTHER* AND *GO!*

NOW WE SHALL *ALL HUNT!*

I *SHOULDN'T* HAVE LET THE OTHERS TALK ME INTO THIS GAME PLAN.

THERE'S A *REASON* I DON'T USUALLY *WORK* LIKE THIS.

THEY *PROBABLY* THINK I UNDERESTIMATE THEM...

PINK!

PUK

PUK

...BUT THEY DON'T *UNDERSTAND.*

ANY TIME *I* GET *LUCKY*, THE *BAD* LUCK FALLS ON SOMEONE *ELSE*...

TUMP

...AND I DON'T GET TO PICK WHO.

THAT'S THAT, THEN?

FAT LADY'S NOT EVEN ON *STAGE* YET.

MAMA CRAZYBOOTS HAD ME *SCARED* BACK THERE, THOUGH. I *ADMIT* IT.

WHATEVER *SHE'S* GOT GOING MUST BE *TRULY* UGLY.

I'M *HERE*, MOM. I'VE *GOT* YOU.

I'M *SORRY*, FELICIA.

I STARTED TO *BELIEVE* YOU MIGHT *LEAVE* ME THERE. I'M *SO* S--

WE'RE ALL *GOOD*, BOSS. *RELAX*, WILL YA?

--WHAT ARE YOU *DOING?*

IT'S *OKAY*, MOM. *REALLY.*

KYOKO AND THE *OTHERS* ARE GOING TO TAKE *GOOD* CARE OF YOU...

...BUT I HAVE--TO FIND--A FRIEND.

I'LL BE-- BACK--! PROMISE!

SHE'D BEEN THROUGH A *LOT*. ALL BECAUSE OF WHO AND WHAT *I* AM...

...AND I'M *SURE* IT WAS THE *WRONG* TIME TO LEAVE HER WITH PEOPLE SHE DIDN'T *KNOW*...

...BUT THOSE *PSYCHOS* WERE OUT THERE--SOMEWHERE-- *HUNTING* HIM.

MY FRIENDS HAD RISKED FAR *MORE* FOR *ME*. I *HAD* TO AT LEAST *TRY*.

I LOOKED FOR TWO DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS...

...BUT I COULDN'T FIND A *SIGN* OF HIM.

"I'M SURE HE'S *FINE*, DEAR. THEY MAKE HIM *SEEM* SO..."

...SO... VIRILE, ON THE NEWS.

VIRILE? HNH.

PURPOSEFUL, THEN. RESILIENT?

HE IS THAT. AND I HAVEN'T HEARD ANY BAD NEWS...YET.

WE'RE ALMOST THERE-- I TRIED TO FIND SOMETHING RESPECTABLE...

I DON'T KNOW. I HEAR HE'S MIXED UP WITH A CRIMINAL ELEMENT.

TAMI NEEDS AN ASSISTANT. KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT COSPLAY?

CAN I AFFORD IT? WITHOUT STEALING ANYTHING?

YOU DID TAKE A HIT SELLING THE OLD PLACE. SO YOU OWE ME.

THAT'S WHY I FOUND YOU THAT OPENING IN THE MAYOR'S OFFICE.

SERIOUSLY. I APPRECIATE ALL THIS, BUT I'M NERVOUS. YOU'RE SURE I'LL BE SAFE HERE?

YOU WANT TO BE SAFER, YOU'LL HAVE TO MOVE IN WITH ME.

SERIOUSLY? BYRON'S BUILT YOU AN AIRTIGHT I.D. SECURITY'S EXCELLENT, INSIDE AND OUT.

WELCOME TO YOUR NEW LIFE, CLAUDIA MOON.

"YOU COULD HAVE TOLD ME ABOUT HER! WHY ALL THE GAMES?"

Weeks Later.

RIGHT. I TELL YOU SOME DUDE'S KIDNAPPED MY MOM TO MAKE ME STEAL THE KRAVEN FAMILY JEWELS, BUT STAY OUT OF IT--

--WHAT DO YOU DO?

I WOULD HAVE TRIED TO HELP--

YEAH, 'CAUSE YOU'RE A GOOD PERSON. AND I COULDN'T LET YOU DO THAT. I WANTED TO KEEP YOU SAFE.

I'M SORRY I COULDN'T AT LEAST FIND YOU-- WARN YOU-- IN TIME.

I COULDN'T EVEN GET A CLEAR PICTURE OF WHAT THEY WERE UP TO.

LIKE I SAID, THEY WANTED TO SACRIFICE ME TO RESURRECT THEIR DEAD DADDY, KRAVEN. PRACTICED ON A LOT OF PEOPLE I CARE ABOUT.

I'M VERY SORRY ABOUT YOUR FRIENDS. HOW'RE YOU HOLDING UP?

LIKE YOU MIGHT EXPECT. NOT GREAT. GETTING BY.

I BROUGHT YOU SOMETHING. MIGHT HELP A LITTLE.

WHY, MISS CAT! THAT'S *AWFUL* KIND OF YOU, BUT CAN YOU *SUPPORT* ME IN THE MANNER TO WHICH I AM ACCUSTOMED?

SHUT *UP*--

IT WAS *HERS*. SASHA KRAVEN'S. *SOMETIMES*...

"...WHEN PEOPLE TAKE SOMETHING *IMPORTANT* FROM YOU...

"...IT *HELPS* TO HAVE SOMETHING OF *THEIRS*. SORT OF A *TROPHY*."

NOT SURE THAT'S AN *IMPULSE* I OUGHT TO *INDULGE* RIGHT NOW, YOU *KNOW?*

HOW 'BOUT YOU KEEP IT FOR ME.

YOU *BET*. I'M ALL ABOUT HELPING YOU CONTROL *IMPULSES*.

DID HER *HEAD* COME *COMPLETELY* OFF WHEN SHE *MISSED* IT?

DUNNO. ONCE I SAW *VASILI'D* GOTTEN *CLEAR*, GETTING MY *OWN* BUTT OUT OF THERE WAS KIND OF THE *PRIORITY*.

GOOD OF YOU TO *BOTHER*, GIVEN EVERYTHING HE *DID*...

"...YOU THINK HE GOT *AWAY?*"

OF *ALL* THE THINGS YOU HAVE TRIED TO DO, YOU ARE *BEST* AT *HIDING.*

BUT *STILL* NOT GOOD *ENOUGH,* LITTLE MOUSE.

YOU *WANTED* ME FOR SO LONG, VASILI.

YET YOU *DON'T* LOOK AT ALL *HAPPY* TO SEE ME.

MISS...MISS ANASTASIA! I-- I *WOULDN'T*-- *PLEASE* DON'T--!

YOU ARE *SO AFRAID.*

IT MAKES YOU *SMELL* BAD.

PLEASE, I--I KNOW THE *BLACK CAT'S* REAL *NAME!* I COULD HELP YOU *FIND* HER, ALL THE *THINGS* SHE *TOOK*--

=HMPH!=

THINGS. *THINGS* DO NOT MATTER.

I HAVE INDULGED THIS LONG *ENOUGH*, DAUGHTER. LET US GO.

YES, PAPA. I'LL BE *QUICK*.

WE HAVE NO *PRESSING* QUARREL WITH THE *CAT*.

IT WAS *YOU* WHO *TRANSGRESSED*, BRINGING HER WHERE SHE DID NOT BELONG.

DON'T YOU *SEE*, VASILI...?

...WE *EACH* HAVE OUR *ROLES* IN THE *ORDER* OF THINGS.

YOURS WAS TO SERVE...

...MINE IS TO *HUNT*...

"...HERS IS TO STEAL."

NEED TO ADJUST CLAW TENSION--LITTLE PINCH IN MY LEFT PALM.

THIS WILL TAKE YOUR MIND OFF IT--FROM THE BUDAPEST MUSEUM...

...EIGHTY GRAND TO THE ANONYMOUS PARTY WHO RETURNED THE TIARA.

WHERE'S THAT PUT OUR TOTAL?

TWO-POINT-THREE MILLION AND CHANGE.

THIS IS EASY AS PIE! WE SHOULD STEAL $#*% AND RETURN IT FOR THE REWARD ALL THE TIME!

EVER MADE PIE, KYOKO? IT'S NOT EASY. AND IT'S UNETHICAL--

PIE IS UNETHICAL?

WE'RE RETURNING THE STUFF SIDOROV TOOK. WHAT YOU'RE DESCRIBING WOULD BE LIKE KIDNAPPING FOR RANSOM. IT'S AGAINST HER CODE.

JUST CLEARED THE TIME-LOCK. IN CASE ANYONE'S INTERESTED.

BUT THIS JOB, TONIGHT, NO CODE PROBLEMS THERE?

WHY SHOULD THERE BE? HE ASKED THEM TO AUCTION IT FOR A CHILDREN'S CHARITY, AND RESENTS THEIR STOWING IT AWAY LIKE THIS. IT'S HIS.

JUST SAYING, WILL THEY SEE IT THAT WAY? I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHY HE SENT HER TO REPO IT.

ARE THEY EVER GOING TO KNOW IT WAS HER? MAYBE THE CLIENT DIDN'T WANT TO DRESS THEM DOWN OVER IT. NOT OUR PLACE TO--

HEY--YOU KIDS WANT TO COME ALONG ON ANY MORE DATES, YOU'LL ALL ZIP IT RIGHT NOW...

...'CAUSE YOUR *BICKERING* IS *KILLING* THE *MOOD* OVER HERE.

HEY THERE, *BEAUTIFUL.*

WANT TO COME *HOME* WITH *ME?*

End

MANY LOVES OF THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1

WEEKS OF TRYING TO GET PETER PARKER TO STICK TO A DATE...

...AND AT HIS FIRST MENTION OF A *HEADACHE*, I SEND HIM HOME.

1ST PRECINC

POLICE

POLICE

*THIS STORY TAKES PLACE DURING THE EVENTS OF AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #627.

HECK, I HAD *NO RIGHT* BEING OUT TONIGHT ANYWAY.

ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT IS DAD'S *ARRAIGNMENT* TOMORROW.

FRONTLINE

CHILD STRANGLER DIES IN PRISON

AND WHO AM I TRYING TO FOOL?

COMING INTO WORK ISN'T GOING TO DISTRACT ME EITHER.

SOMEONE REMIND ME *WHY* I DO THIS TO MYSELF?

OH WOW.

ASK AND YE SHALL RECEIVE, HUH?

FRONTLINE

CHILD STRANGLER DIES IN PRISON

"THE MAN WHO TERRIFIED A CITY OVER A DECADE AGO DIED OF CARDIAC ARREST IN HIS CELL THIS MORNING."

I HAVEN'T THOUGHT ABOUT THAT CASE IN *YEARS*.

Memories

BRIAN REED
WRITER

NICK DRAGOTTA
ARTIST

VC'S CLAYTON COWLES
LETTERER

SPECIAL THANKS TO **BRAD SIMPSON**

Years Ago...

I'D RATHER BE HOME.

AND I DON'T WANT YOU HOME *ALONE* RIGHT NOW, CARLIE BEAR.

BUT I ALWAYS STAY HOME ALO--

HUMOR YOUR FATHER, OKAY?

FOR JUST A LITTLE WHILE LONGER, PRETEND LIKE YOU ARE A LITTLE GIRL WHO DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HOW *TERRIBLE* THE WORLD IS.

SIGH

OKAY.

HI, CARLIE! HOW ARE YOU? I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN *FOREVER!*

HEY, CAPTAIN STACY.

HEY, GWEN.

OFFICER WATANABE, THE GIRLS ARE GOING TO STAY IN MY OFFICE.

CHECK IN ON THEM FROM TIME TO TIME?

YES, SIR, CAPTAIN.

SEE YOU SOON, GWEN.

ALRIGHT, DADDY! I'VE GOT HOMEWORK TO DO. I WON'T EVEN NOTICE YOU'RE GONE.

IF YOU NEED ANYTHING, CARLIE, OFFICER WATANABE CAN GET HOLD OF--

I'M FINE, DAD.

IF YOU GUYS NEED ANYTHING, GIVE A YELL? I'VE GOT A MOUNTAIN OF PAPERWORK--

WE'LL BE FINE.

WHY DOESN'T *YOUR* DAD ALWAYS TREAT *YOU* LIKE YOU'RE THREE YEARS OLD?

EVER SINCE *MY* MOM DIED--

I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT *MOMS*.

I'M SORRY. I JUST...I WASN'T TRYING TO--

IT'S OKAY. JUST SAYING, NO DEATH TALK, OKAY?

An Hour Later...

BORED.

AGREED.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT THAT?

ROAM THE STATION?

WE SET FOOT OUTSIDE OF THIS OFFICE AND OFFICER WATANABE WILL PROBABLY TRY AND WRANGLE US.

8

TRUE.

WANNA GO THROUGH YOUR DAD'S DESK?

WE CAN'T DO THAT!

WELL, WE CAN'T GO THROUGH MY DAD'S DESK.

IT'S *DOWNSTAIRS*, AND HE DOESN'T HAVE A PRIVATE OFFICE LIKE THIS.

Two Minutes Later...

SHOOT, THIS IS ALOT DULLER THAN I EXPECTED.

HOW CAN ONE MAN HAVE SO MANY PAPER CLIPS?

HEY... WHAT'S THIS?

OH WOW.

WHAT IS THAT?

IT'S...

THIS IS THE CASE FILE ABOUT *THE GIRLS.*

I DON'T WANT TO SEE THAT. PUT IT AWAY, PLEASE.

THAT'S WHERE OUR DADS WERE GOING, YOU KNOW.

THERE'S A NEW ONE. EIGHT NOW.

THAT'S SO TERRIBLE. SOMEONE STRANGLING TEENAGERS?

CARLIE, WE SHOULD PUT THAT FILE BACK.

CARLIE--

WAIT.

CARLIE--

NO. GWEN. *WAIT.*

LOOK AT THESE PICTURES. SOMETHING ISN'T RIGHT.
WHAT'S NOT RIGHT IS THE *DEAD GIRLS!* I'VE SEEN TOO MUCH ALREADY--
THIS IS *IMPORTANT*, I THINK.
MAYBE.
I DON'T KNOW. YOU LOOK AND TELL ME.
OH GOD...
WHAT AM I LOOKING AT?
SOMETHING'S BUGGING ME ABOUT HOW SHE'S DRESSED.
SHE'S ABOUT FOUR OR FIVE YEARS BEHIND THE CURVE.
NOBODY WEARS THOSE BEAR SHIRTS ANY MORE.
YOU'RE RIGHT ABOUT THE CLOTHES.
THESE PAPERS SAY THE GIRLS WERE ALL DRESSED DIFFERENTLY WHEN THEY DISAPPEARED.
SO?
THEY ALL HAVE BARRETTES IN THEIR HAIR.

A KITTY. A PONY. A RAINBOW...

THESE ARE ALL THINGS I WOULD HAVE WORN WHEN I WAS NINE OR TEN--

ABOUT FOUR YEARS AGO.

WHY WOULD YOU DRESS SOMEONE TO LOOK YOUNGER?

MAYBE SO THEY'D LOOK LIKE SOMEONE ELSE? SOMEONE YOUNGER? SOMEBODY THEY'D LOST?

CARLIE, THAT'S INSANE!

YEAH, WHEN YOU START STRANGLING TEENAGE GIRLS, I THINK INSANE IS AN OKAY WORD FOR YOU TO USE.

WHAT THE--?!

OFFICER WATANABE!

WHAT ARE YOU TWO *DOING*?!

PLEASE DON'T TELL OUR FATHERS--

THAT I LEFT YOU ALONE TO DIG THROUGH HIS CASE FILES?!

DO YOU THINK I'M INSANE?

YOU *HAVE* TO TELL THEM.

NOT IF I WANT TO KEEP MY JOB.

THE KILLER IS DRESSING THE GIRLS UP TO LOOK LIKE HIS DAUGHTER WHEN SHE DIED.

...WHAT?

I MEAN... I THINK? MAYBE?

IT'S KIND OF JUST A GUESS RIGHT NOW.

Three Hours Later...

GWEN, YOUR DAD WANTS TO SEE YOU IN HIS OFFICE.

YES SIR, MISTER COOPER.

DAD--

NOT A WORD, YOUNG LADY.

WHAT YOU TWO DID--

IT WAS MY IDEA.

--WAS *ILLEGAL.* IT WAS *IMMORAL.*

GWEN DIDN'T EVEN WANT--

AND IT *MIGHT* HAVE GIVEN US THE LEAD WE NEEDED TO CRACK THIS THING.

WHAT?

THIS IS *GROWN-UP* TALK, GOT ME?

OKAY...

YOU WERE RIGHT. FOUR YEARS AGO...I'M NOT GOING TO GET INTO DETAILS, BUT FOUR YEARS AGO THERE WAS ANOTHER DEATH.

A GIRL, TEN YEARS OLD.

AND HER FATHER...HE WAS ONE OF OUR SUSPECTS IN THESE NEW CASES, BUT WE HAD NO WAY TO TIE HIM IN.

I SOLVED YOUR CASE FOR YOU?!

NOT YET, NO.

BUT WE *ARE* MOVING ON TO THE NEXT STEP OF THE INVESTIGATION.

THIS ISN'T TV, WE DON'T SOLVE CASES IN AN *AFTERNOON.*

SO AM I STILL IN TROUBLE FOR THE SNOOPING?

OH *YES.*

NO AMOUNT OF JUNIOR DETECTIVE WORK WOULD CHANGE THAT.

BUT YOU STRAIGHTEN UP AND FLY RIGHT, CARLIE BEAR, AND MAYBE SOMEDAY YOU CAN DO THIS POLICE THING FOR REAL.

CHILD STRANGLER DIES IN PRISON

THE MAN WHO TERRIFIED A CITY OVER A DECADE

The End.

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

ROGER STERN WRITER RON FRENZ PENCILER VICTOR OLAZABA INKER ANDREW DALHOUSE COLORIST DAVE SHARPE LETTERER

Mary Jane!

Oh, yes. After a long morning in front of the cameras--

Mary Jane! Over here!

--this makes it all worthwhile.

We love your show, Mary Jane! We love you!

Love ya right back!

M.J., if you want to make that 2 o'clock, we have to go--now!

SEWN UP

WITH MARY JANE WATSON
STARRING SOON IN
CAPTAIN FATE 4

Awright, back off! Give 'er space!

Mary Jane--!

Sorry, Tigers-- gotta dash!

Get us out of here, Stanley.

STUDIO LOBBY

Leave it to me.

C'mon, stay on the sidewalk!

You can stop waving now, M.J. They can't see you through the mirrored glass.

Thanks, Stella.
Can't wait to get this makeup off!
Never let the fans hear you say that! Cosmetic endorsements bring in half your income.
I know.
But I want a natural look for my next appointment.
Girl, I don't know why you're going to that cattle call.
I could get you a private audition.
I'm sure you could.
But this isn't the kind of role a "Mary Jane Watson" gets offered.
⁉ Conan wants you on his new show? Oh...*Neal* Conan.
The NPR guy? Sure, why not?
He's cute.
Girl, you're wasted on radio.
It's all ***promotion,*** Stel'. With the new TV show and a movie about to be released, I have to grab it while I can.
I won't have my looks forever.
Let ***me*** worry about that.
⁉ Why are we stopping?
Stan--?
Sorry 'bout that, Ms. W. Traffic's all tied up.
I think it's 'cause of Spider-Man.
Spider-Man...?

Of course. It *would* be *Spider-Man.* Who on earth is he fighting...?

...you can't stop LADY STILT-MAN!

I *can't?* Oh, *no!* Whatever shall I do?

A-mazing...

...how does she even *stand up* in those things?

I should have known. I couldn't very well move back to the City and *not* expect him to cross my path.

I've seen this movie before. It'll be faster if I hoof it.

Be careful, M.J. And don't forget tonight's bookstore signing--!

Hey, have you *ever* known me to be late for a gig?

Some hike!

BEAU

OPENING SOON

AUDITIONS TODAY !!

If this theater were any further Off-Broadway, it would be in Staten Island.

Ah, yes...the old *cattle call.* I haven't endured one since my first soap. That seems like a lifetime ago.

Next up..."Emma Holmes?"

That's *me!*

One thing I learned from Spider-Man...the value of a "secret identity."

I'm getting lines from a stagehand? Wow, this *is* low-budget.

Let's take it from Act Two, Scene Three...

All right...

I can't lie to you any more, Donald. I know ***everything!*** *I've known...*

...your secret for years! Up until today, I always thought I could cope...but...I ***can't!***

I just can't cope with the fact that Peter Parker is secretly ***Spider-Man!***

I never meant to hurt you, Darla. I care about you so much.

And I care about ***you...***

...Peter! I really do! But you come with so much baggage...

...that's why I originally left New York! I just couldn't take it anymore!

It was doomed from the start, wasn't it? I've never been lucky in love--!

Don't ***say*** *that! You're a good man. A* ***wonderful*** *man! It...it's just that...*

...I'm not the down-home-and-marrying kind.

Hey, put on a smile, dollface. I'll see you around... sometime.

That...that was *great!* One of the best readings I've ever heard. You have such... *presence...!*

I know that look. Here comes the *"But..."*

But we're really looking for someone... well... *plainer.*

I'm afraid that you're just too *pretty* to be my Darla.

Hey, that's okay. I was looking for a role that's more of a stretch, anyway.

?

"Too pretty"...that's one I'm not used to hearing.

It would have been a hassle, fitting a stage production in around my other commitments. But it would have been worth it, just to prove I'm not a one-trick pony.

At least he thought I could act.

In the meantime, I have the latest blockbuster to promote, and a show to host. And who knows? Maybe someday...

Oh.

There's that coffee-table book of Peter's photos. Wasn't so long ago it was getting rave reviews...

BARGAIN PRICED BOOKS!!

WEBS

SPIDERMAN

...and now it's "Priced to move at only $3.99!"

Poor Peter. Maybe I should give him a call...

...let him know that I'm thinking of...

No.

KLIK

The past is past. I have to stop looking backward.

We both do.

Yes.

That's better.

It's *Show Time!*

...now in our Author's Area-- *Mary Jane Watson*-- signing copies of *The Making of Captain Fate Four.*

CLAP CLAP CLAP

Told you I wouldn't be late.

...going great, Craig.

EXCLUSIVE SIGNING
MARY JANE WATSON
STAR OF THE NEW HIT EPIC FILM
CAPTAIN FATE 4
LEGEND OF ATLANTIS 2

The fame and glamor don't last, but so what? I'm going to enjoy the ride for as long as I can.

This is everything I ever wanted.

Isn't it?

Why *not* do *The Daily Show* and *Colbert* the same night?

Yes, like a crossover!

END.

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #630 VILLAIN VARIANT

BY JOE QUINONES

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #631 HEROIC AGE VARIANT
BY DOUG BRAITHWAITE

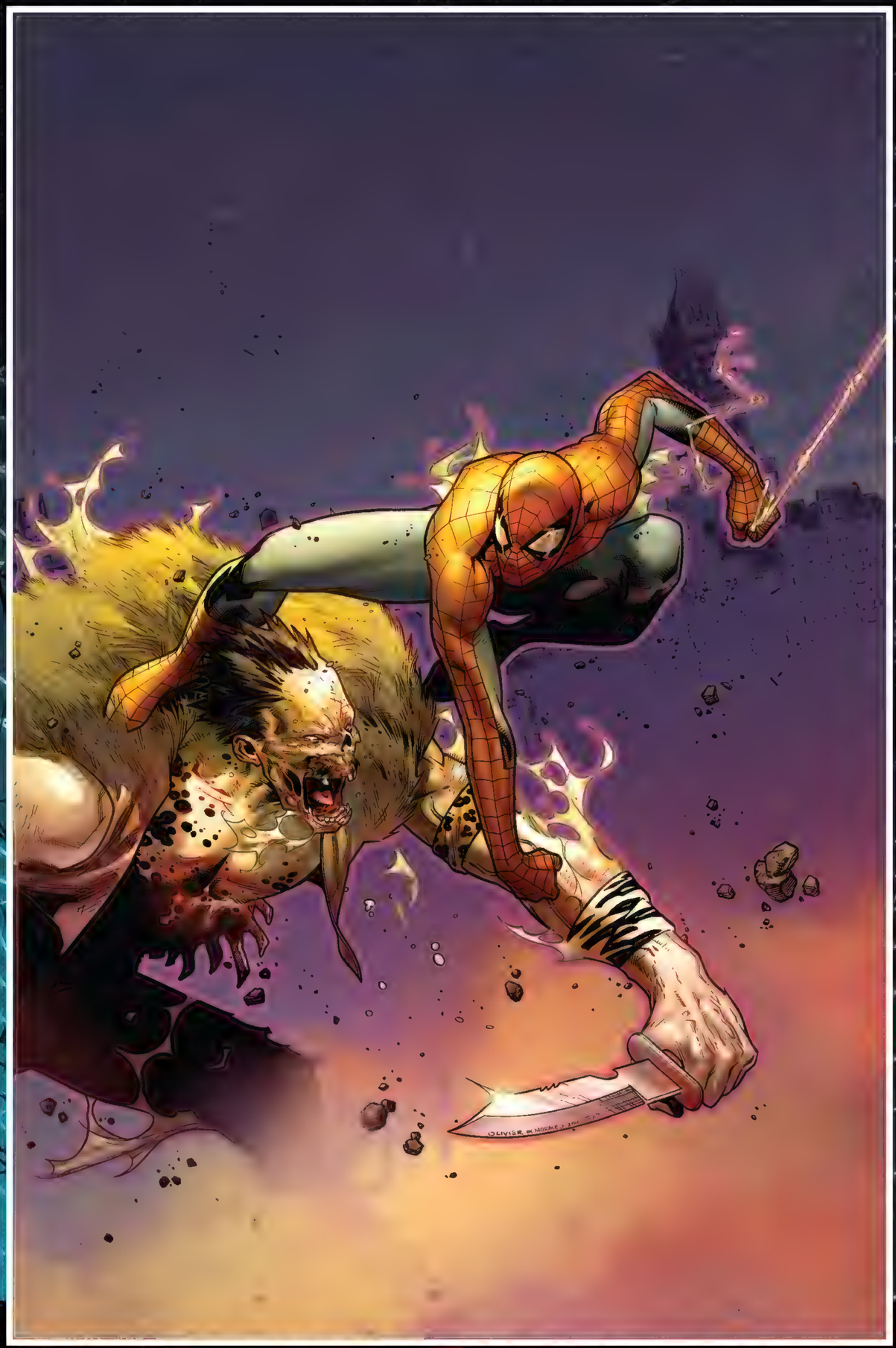
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #632 HEROIC AGE VARIANT
BY JAY ANACLETO & BRIAN HABERLIN

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #633 HEROIC AGE VARIANT
COVER BY MIKE McKONE & JEROMY COX

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #636 VILLAIN VARIANT
BY JOE QUINONES

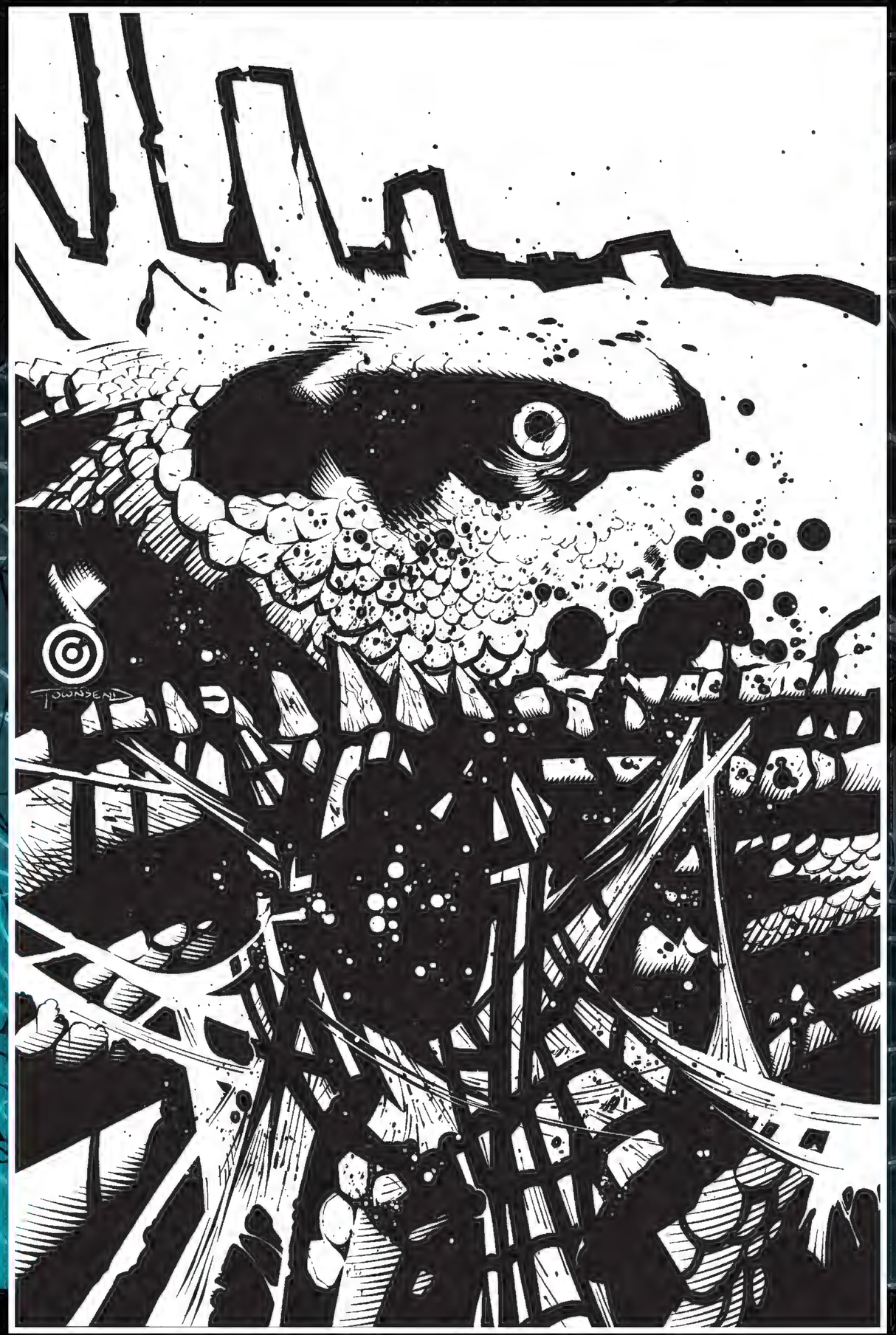
AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #634 VARIANT
BY LEINIL FRANCIS YU

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #635 VARIANT
COVER BY GABRIELE DELL'OTTO

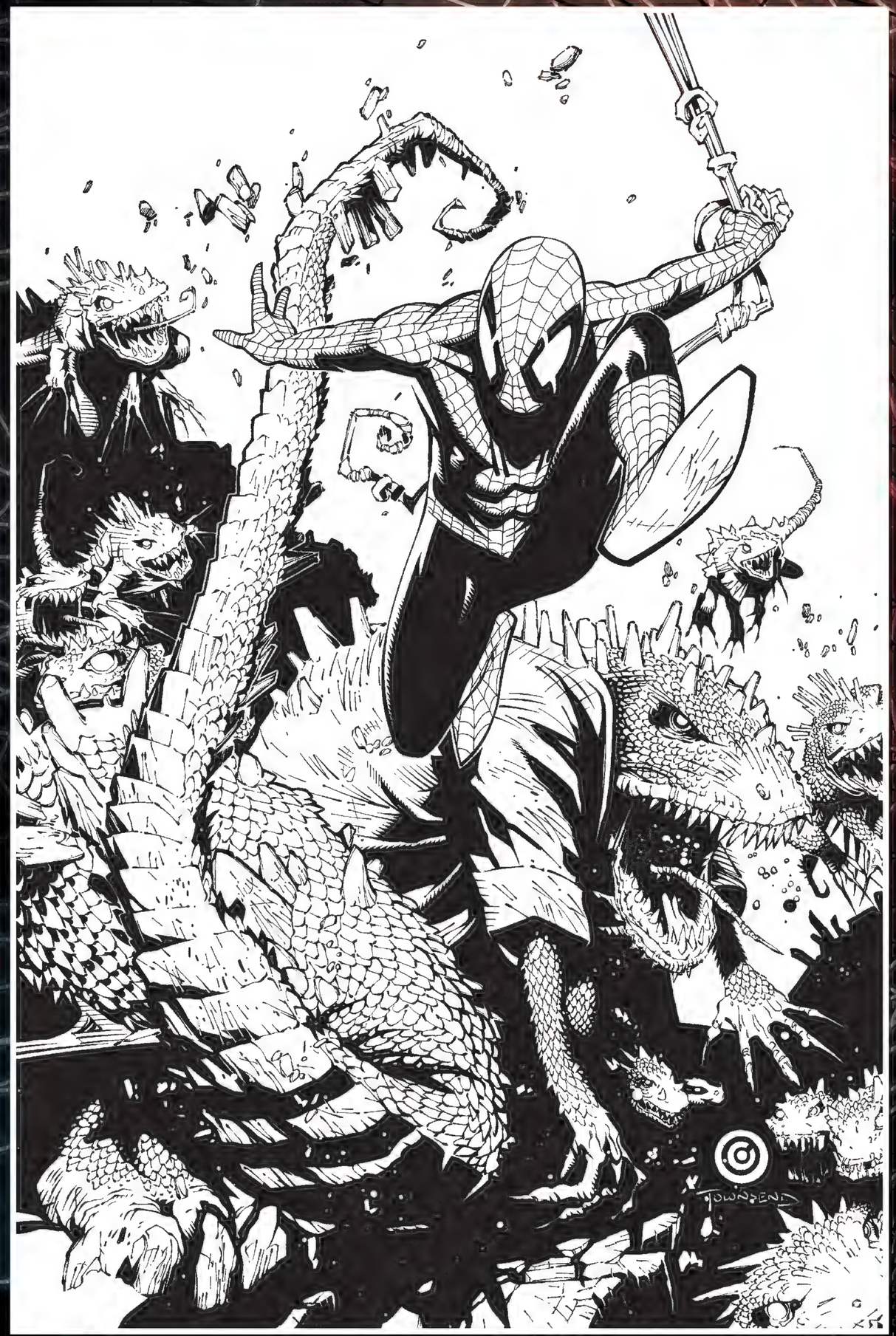


AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #637 VARIANT
BY OLIVIER COIPEL, MARK MORALES & JUSTIN PONSOR

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN PRESENTS: BLACK CAT #1 VARIANT
BY J. SCOTT CAMPBELL



AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #630 COVER INKS
BY CHRIS BACHALO & TIM TOWNSEND



AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #631 COVER INKS
BY CHRIS BACHALO & TIM TOWNSEND

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #636, PAGE 4 INKS
BY MARCO CHECCHETTO

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #636, PAGE 5 INKS
BY MARCO CHECCHETTO

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #634 PAGES 6-7 PENCILS
BY MICHAEL LARK

KRAVEN FAMILY PROCESS ART
BY PHIL JIMENEZ

CAN SPIDER-MAN SURVIVE *THE GRIM HUNT?*

As his run through the gauntlet of his deadliest foes concludes, Spidey must tackle one of the most unyielding enemies he's ever faced! But it turns out that something can stop the Juggernaut, and that means big trouble for both of them! Then, the Lizard is back — deadlier than ever! But as the Kraven family's plans come to fruition, the hunt begins — and it's Spider season! Sasha and Anastasia Kravinoff are preparing an unholy resurrection, and that puts our friendly neighborhood wall-crawler and his arachnid allies — as well as the Black Cat — in the line of fire! Can Spider-Man get through this latest challenge without a death in the family?

Collecting *Amazing Spider-Man (1999) #627-637, Grim Hunt: The Kraven Saga, Amazing Spider-Man Presents: Black Cat #1-4*, and material from *Web of Spider-Man (2009) #6-7* and *Many Loves of the Amazing Spider-Man (2010) #1* — written by Roger Stern, Zeb Wells, Joe Kelly, J.M. DeMatteis, Jen Van Meter, Fred Van Lente and more; and illustrated by Lee Weeks, Chris Bachalo, Emma Ríos, Michael Lark, Max Fiumara, Marco Checchetto, Javier Pulido, Javier Rodriguez and more.

MARVEL

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